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ABSTRACT

Five studies conducted at Oklahoma State University on the nature of news are reported in this volume. The first study reports the similarities and differences in news values among 10 city editors. The second and third studies replicate the first, one with city news editors and the other with wire service newsmen as subjects. Study 4 summarizes a before-after study of news judgments of 19 students and the instructor in a beginning reporting class. The last study asked the readers to judge the input of structured news. All of these studies are exploratory and their results are offered as suggestive rather than conclusive findings. The patterns of the news judgments, however, indicate strongly that practitioners and educators alike could benefit by orienting themselves to the notion that news seems to revolve around a fairly consistent underlying framework or structure. Until this underlying structure is defined, refined, and developed into a more operational construct, the question "What is news?" will remain unanswered. (TO)

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# THE NATURE OF NEWS
# IN
# THREE DIMENSIONS

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In Collaboration With
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Ward, alone, takes the blame for any of the following to the degree they exist: crooked headlines, misspellings, pages out of order, style inconsistencies, lack of internal, external validity, reliability, misquotes, misunderstandings, misinterpretations and the mistaken assumption that he could write this series in half the time it took. But none of this "doubled time" was university time. Strangely enough, the latter has gone to the students.

TO:

A TREATY BETWEEN
THE SANDPIPERS AND
KIWIS OF THE
MASS MEDIA

# Preface

A few years ago, Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., then George H. Gallup Professor of Communications Research at the University of Iowa's School of Journalism charged a class in communication theory to devise a cogent theoretical rationale to help explain what influences the gatekeeper's news judgments.

Having just entered graduate studies (oblivious of Kurt Lewin, David M. White, et al), we wondered why a research professor was interested in security guards and cemetery caretakers--those being our chief referents for "gatekeeper."

Several weeks and scores of journal articles later, we had devised several models to explain decision-making in various communication chains. From transactional perception through cognitive dissonance, we warmed up for more bouts with belief systems.

At course's end, hypothetical gatekeepers had been content analyzed, factor analyzed, systems analyzed, sociometricized, psychologized and psychoanalyzed--all in absentia. By that time, we knew WHO the gatekeeper was, but we had yet to understand WHAT he did or WHY. We had plenty of company.

For some, the course had a "tantalus effect." Several workable designs for fruitful gatekeeper studies lay just beyond our cognitive grasp.

"First, we've got to look at how the gatekeeper operates in his own system," MacLean said. "That is--get at his role behavior and the position that goes with it. Look for consistency and conflict in role behaviors. What should the editor do? How do others perceive what he does?"

It appeared an investigator might need a time machine to bridge the temporal gap. Such a study might be feasible, PROVIDED:

1. Role behaviors first could be described in the editor's existing newspaper.
2. The editor then could be transferred to a newspaper quite different from the first and given a chance to assimilate the norms of the new system.
3. Role behaviors could be described in the new system and compared with the first.

The task was appearing more difficult.

"Furthermore, ask the gatekeeper on the second newspaper to describe his role there, as well as his perceived role if he were working on the newspaper the first gatekeeper left," MacLean said. "After this, you try to get at 'differences that make a difference' in the two gatekeepers' news values."

With just two gatekeepers and two newspapers, MacLean had given us a rough idea of the overwhelming task of controlling the multitude of interacting factors that determine the "nature of the news."

We knew, at this point, as did MacLean, that our thinking was too abstract. Our questions and statements, in their early forms, were unanswerable and, thus, unresearchable. We also knew that many probes into gatekeeper behavior and news values were without a structure sufficient to explain a framework of news--a framework that would help us predict an editor's decision on the relative play of various stories in a given input.

Any research on the gatekeeper role confronts specialized intra- and inter-system values interacting with interpersonal and over-all cultural values. And conflict often arises among these combinations of values. The conflict can stem from a myriad of social-psychological and economic pressures that contribute to, and impinge upon them.

Any attempt to explain the relative effects of these variables was impossible without a parsimonious body of theory of "what makes the news." Parsimony would have to come from less-ambitious, short-range research. The research would have to comprise a different view of the STRUCTURE of news as it exists. This structure, itself, would have to comprise news dimensions more encompassing than the subject-matter categories, yet less encompassing than many previous "all-inclusive" phenomenological speculation on gatekeepers' decisions.

With this in mind, several of MacLean's students continued efforts to unravel and reweave the web of factors that help explain what news is.

The following series of studies was initiated by the author and replicated by him and three graduate students at Oklahoma State University. Other studies have been completed by James K. Buckalew of San Diego State College and Robert W. Clyde of Wartburg College. L. Erwin Atwood of Southern Illinois University has shown a continuing interest in, and has completed several studies on, news values.

Due to cost and time limitations, only the Oklahoma State studies are reported herein, with the hope that all the studies later can be compiled in one volume. With minor alterations, all the studies have used the general structure of news developed by Ward under Professor MacLean's advisement.

Study No. 1 reports the similarities and differences in news values among 10 city editors. This was the first gatekeeper study to use an identical input of news stories comporting to the 3-D (three-dimensional) structure of news suggested by Ward. The news stories, themselves, reported events in the mythical city of Middleport, U.S.A.

Replicating the first study were those of Oklahoma State University master's candidates L. Edward Carter and George Rhoades, reported in study Nos. 2 and 3. Carter and Rhoades--both former city editors--were testing the reliability and validity of the Ward's 3-D structure by "localizing" the hypothetical Middleport stories.

Carter--working with city editors and their respective reporters on five Oklahoma newspapers--first asked the newsmen to judge a pool of Ward's hypothetical stories. Later, he asked the editors and reporters to judge the same pool of stories after they were "localized;" i.e., names of local people, institutions, streets, etc., replaced Ward's mythical referents.

Rhoades extended the structured-input idea to seven Associated Press and seven United Press International newsmen in Oklahoma. Using actual state stories comporting to Ward's news dimensions, Rhoades not only was interested in the reliability and validity of previous work, but in frequent claims that the Associated Press plays "sensational" news higher than does the United Press International.

Study No. 4 summarizes a before-after study of news judgments of 19 students and the instructor in an Oklahoma State University beginning reporting class. The study raised many questions about journalism education.

Aside from the work of Atwood, Carl Galow, who recently completed doctoral study in Higher Education-Mass Communication at Oklahoma State University, is the only investigator who has asked the readers to judge an input of structured news. His investigation is reported in Study No. 5.

These five studies, plus those of Buckalew, Clyde and Atwood, are the first to utilize a similar structured input of news. They are the first, so far as the author knows, that quantify the accumulative and interactive effects of various news elements. The studies are exploratory. Findings are offered as suggestive, rather than conclusive.

The patterns of news judgments, however, indicate strongly that practitioners and educators, alike, could benefit substantially by orienting themselves to the notion that--though news seems to be an elusive process, defying definition--it does revolve around a fairly consistent underlying framework or structure. Until this underlying structure is defined, refined and developed into a more operational construct, the question--"What is news?"--will remain steadfast on the horizon, blocking the path to a substantial part of the answer lurking just beyond.

Regarding the more than 100 persons who contributed to this volume, the author's most memorable and constructive experiences came from association with the 10 city editors who gave their valuable time and knowledge to the first gatekeeper study in the series.

Never would the series have got under way without encouragement and advise of Professors L. Erwin Atwood, Arthur M. Barnes, Samuel Becker, John Kottman, Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr. and Leslie G. Moeller--all of the University of Iowa when the first study began.

The author is indebted to Dr. James Alsbrook, Dr. Edward Bassett, Mr. Michael Barnes, Dr. James Buckalew, Mr. Paul Butler, Dr. Mark Guldin, Mr. Knut Royce, Dr. Keith Sanders and Dr. Paul Snider. They generously gave time and talent as preliminary advisers and judges while working on advanced degrees, themselves, at the University of Iowa.

A special thanks goes to Dr. Harry E. Heath, Jr., director of Oklahoma State University's School of Journalism and Broadcasting, and to the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation, who have shown active interest and support for the publication of this volume.

Tantamount to the author's contribution are those of Mr. Carter, Mr. Rhoades and Dr. Galow, who conducted the field work and wrote the original versions of Study Nos. 2, 3 and 5. They graciously permitted the author to perform minor additional analyses and-or to write condensed versions of their findings. This was done simply and solely to attain consistency in the reports. Certainly, their studies, written in thesis form, are more complete and of high quality. The work is theirs, not the author's.

The beginning reporting students and instructor--respondents in Study No. 4--laid the groundwork for many future studies of interest to journalism education. Their contributions potentially have the greatest import.

Mr. Carter, Mr. Rhoades and Dr. Galow already have expressed their respective and everlasting gratitude to Oklahoma city editors, reporters and wire service newsmen and to the Indiana readers, whose cooperation can have a far-reaching effect on our understanding the nature of news.

Finally, these studies, hopefully, are written for practitioners, as well as educators who may want to alter and-or improve the methodology and design for further investigation into news structure.

# Introduction
# A Three - Dimensional Framework of News

For the most part, the things we know--we know indirectly. Only a minute portion of the world's events occurs within our sensory range. Even those events before our very eyes are observed in a selective fashion.

General semanticists, among others, note that the "seeing-believing" notion is a myth--that no one sees all of a thing and no two persons see the same thing. Man's sensory limitations, alone, give merit to this argument.

Many objects and events beyond our sensory range come to us through symbols from other people who WERE within range. Many of our sources do not witness the events, themselves, but learn about them through symbols relayed by still others.

Much public information, then, results from a long series of communicative acts in an on-going, institutionalized-human communication chain, such as a print or broadcast medium.

In these vast communication chains, some people have more-esteemed roles than others in relaying information. They are the vitally important gatekeepers of the news.

They select and display for us many otherwise "unknowable" parts of the environment.

To understand how gatekeepers in general, and types of gatekeepers, in particular, make decisions, is paramount to a fuller grasp of interacting forces comprising the day's news. As Schramm said, "No aspect of communication is so impressive as the enormous number of choices and discards which have to be made between the formation of symbols in the mind of the communicator and the approach of a related symbol in the mind of the receiver."[1]

Ultimately, Gieber was correct in asserting that, "News is what newspapermen make it."[2]

But dissected, this also could mean that news--among other factors--also is what makes newsmen. This further reminds us that the cause of any one thing is everything. And "everything" is impossible to grasp, understand and operationalize. A news analyst can only hope to stop the news-making process theoretically and try to determine what parts are most salient to the operation of any one part under surveillance. To paraphrase general semanticist Wendell Johnson, such a task requires a theoretical construct of the mechanism inside the watch to explain reliably what one observes on the face.[3]

Many students have tried to pin-point reasons for news judgment through ex-post-facto analyses of content. Such "post-race betting" can lead to spurious findings and deterministic claims about the nature of news.

Notable analyses of content have represented two-pronged "stabs in the dark," netting over-simplified explanations of news elements, on the one hand, and a mixture of non-exclusive categories on the other. News characteristics and story topics have been equated in single content analysis packages to explain the nature of news. Thus, the news is described by lists of stories from individual newspapers. Defying generalization, such efforts suggest that future investigators scan even MORE newspapers and devise NEW lists of stories--few of which can explain a common structure of the news across all media.

Gatekeepers, individually and collectively, have a difficult and complex job. They must "read" the publics' common problems and needs to select and convey information most relevant to solution and fulfillment. This suggests surveillance not only of mass media messages, but conditions under which they are produced and relayed. As a corollary, we must survey what various publics do with those messages.

Countless readership studies have fallen short on the above consideration. They reflect a dire need of content representativeness and stronger measuring instruments, as well as preconceived structure. Too often, their after-the-fact nature aids little in determining what readers want, compared with what they get. Readers are asked to recall only a thin slice of the universe of news. Further, one is hard put to find any studies involving a representative sample of input that was judged by both editors and their respective readers. Thus, gaps between gatekeepers and readers--if they exist--have gone undetected. What are the similarities and differences between the news values of those who edit and those who consume the news?

This is a crucial point in Stempel's suggestion that "because editors contend that their job is to give the public what it wants, it seems fruitful to inquire whether the editors and public have any common ground in their concepts of news.[4]

To review all past attempts at unravelling the nature of news would be an Herculean task--beyond the scope of present efforts. But one more point needs emphasis, regarding studies involving the psyche, personality type, etc., of the gatekeeper.

Those involved with the present studies believe that the nature of news is more stable than most of us have suspected--much more stable than the "nature" of individual gatekeepers. A newsman--as a newsman--is an institutionalized individual--quite different, yet more predictable, in that role than in many of his more flexible roles. Many--if not most--of his intrapersonal complexities may not affect substantially his institutionalized news package. Little support was found in the following studies for any substantial equation of the internal profile of the newsman with the profile of his product.

## Approaching the Problem

Decades of research still leaves the perplexing question: "What is news?" But accompanying this is the realization that detours on the road to an answer reflect the terminology of the question.

If a specific answer to the same vague question has seemed to lie just beyond the horizon for the past 30 years, it seems chiefly because we have not discussed or developed a theoretical framework of news applicable to all news stories, regardless of topic. Thus, the seemingly baffling complexity of even one gatekeeper's output has defied parsimony.

Even the most fundamental exploration uncovers the sobering notion that news--like child psychology and constitutional freedoms--is a many-sided entity that everybody KNOWS, rhetorically, but few UNDERSTAND, operationally.

But the surface of news is more complex than its underlying structure. Its nature evolves from this lower-level structure, which may comprise as few as five or six news elements. These elements carry many different labels, but they are familiar to virtually all newsmen and journalism educators.

The difference between KNOWING and UNDERSTANDING the news is much like the difference between an occupant's KNOWLEDGE of, say, an office building and the structural engineer's UNDERSTANDING of the underlying framework which supports the offices, corridors, etc.

The occupants "KNOW their way around" every compartment, but are blind to the basic supporting structure of their working-day world. The engineer "sees" the structure he conceived and better understands the finished product.

The daily news, to most people, has an office-building profile. Newspapers, with their many compartments, varying in size, location and headlines, command the attention of millions of reader occupants who know them intimately, but do not understand the structure of their contents. These occupants optically walk through the compartments daily, visiting them for varying lengths of time.

But what of reporters and editors--the structural engineers--who plan and build the daily news packages? Can they explain their product as well as does the building engineer? Evidence to date leaves room for doubt. News engineers vary greatly in what seems to be less than adequate explanation of news structure. The nature of news remains elusive to many readers, lay critics and journalism educators, as well as to working journalists. The profusion of rhetoric, all too often, has blocked the path to a meaningful classification of news characteristics.

Our first step, then, was to "decontaminate" the hazy question and bring accumulated data into focus. On a more manageable level, we asked: "What basic structure underlies the staggering number of messages disseminated daily through the mass media?"

To illustrate the need for a more basic theory of news, an Ohio editor, during our preliminary field work, said his news judgment was nothing more than unconditioned reflex to a routine and boring daily grind. Asked what he was "unconditionally reflexing" to, the editor outlined his news values in terms of individual stories and "human interest" angles. Yet, under quasi-laboratory conditions, he was highly consistent in relative importance he placed on our previously defined news elements, regardless of story topics.

The editor points up the chief reason for the vague discourses about news. Most of us have taken a shotgun approach to something that shows a definite pattern. We've described each story as a single pellet, but have failed to spot inter-relationships of parts in a framework that gives consistency to the news on any one page--and across all pages--of a newspaper.

Our preliminary work was plagued with the same difficulties. We gleaned more than 200 news value labels from 35 journalism textbooks and interviews with former newspaper editors. Since the labels described single aspects of news and ignored the underlying framework, we could not relate news values to actual judgments and outputs of newsmen.

Stempel already had touched on the difficulty, insisting that news values, central to all journalism, had never been defined satisfactorily. "Reporters and editors have discussed it (news value) for decades; at least three generations of journalism professors have tried to pin it down,"[5] Stempel said.

Perennial confusion about the nature of news, followed by his own attempt to define news through factor analysis, led Stempel to suggest that perhaps news judgment is a more complex process than we have suspected. On a brighter note, he saw some hope in a better understanding through research tools now available.[6]

Taking Stempel's cue, we devised a news framework comprising a minimum number of news dimensions that were semantically different, yet related to actual news judgments. Previous categories, news value words, etc., had to be explained by a few dimensions without much loss.

The resulting framework comprised three news dimensions: NORMALITY, PROMINENCE and SIGNIFICANCE. Each dimension contained one or two mutually independent news elements, which seemed to represent the basic framework of "real world" daily news output.

Louis Guttman's principles of facet analysis, or dimensional structuring, helped us to conceptualize the theoretical framework of independent news dimensions and elements. This enabled us to quantify the effects of combining several news elements in any given story.[7]

From the 3-D framework, we compiled a pool of news stories representing combinations of news elements believed to be salient to working journalists. If the framework was reliable, then individual news stories--and all news stories--could be talked about more meaningfully.

The framework excludes sports and-or feature-type content, comics, columns, etc. These aspects of media output contain dimensions other than, and in addition to, those which underlie the mainstream of "breaking news." Timeliness and proximity--frequently cited as news characteristics--were held constant in the belief that these are CONDITIONS that amplify the relative importance of the basic news elements, rather than being news elements, per se. For example, many events are timely and local, but are not reported simply because news elements are lacking.

Primarily, the present studies dealt with current local and state news. They are based on the belief that COMPLEXITY DOMINATES PREVALENT NOTIONS OF NEWS ELEMENTS. FURTHER, A PARSIMONIOUS UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATURE OF NEWS MUST START WITH A FRAMEWORK OF INDEPENDENT AND EXHAUSTIVE DIMENSIONS

THAT BETTER EXPLAIN THIS COMPLEXITY.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] Wilbur Schramm, Mass Communications (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1949), p. 289.

[2] Walter Gieber, "News is What Newspapermen Make It," in People, Society, and Mass Communications, Lewis A. Dexter and David Manning White, eds., (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), pp. 173-182.

[3] Wendell Johnson, People in Quandaries (New York: Harper & Row, Inc., 1946), pp. 70-82.

[4] Guido H. Stempel III, "An Empirical Exploration of the Nature of News," Paul J. Deutschmann Memorial Papers in Mass Communications Research (Cincinnati, O.: Scripps-Howard Research, 1963), p. 23.

[5] Ibid., p. 19.

[6] Stempel, loc. cit., p. 23.

[7] Louis Guttman, "What Lies Ahead for Factor Analysis?" Educational and Psychological Measurement, 18:497-515.

# Study No. 1:
# Ten City Editors Judge Identical Input

Daily decisions on city desks of more than 1700 daily newspapers are reacted to in millions of ways by as many local readers. These decisions are made primarily by city editors, each empowered to judge the fate of tens of thousands of symbols typed on inexpensive, rough-grained newsprint.

Usually, the number of local stories exceeds what the editor can, or will, use. Some stories are spiked at the gate and, thus, remain meaningless to many community residents. Others are trimmed, revamped or amplified before released, while some go through in their original form.

Acceptance or rejection of a story is one indication of its perceived importance. Location, headline size, and typographical devices further distinguish its importance. Such dressings can make "big stories little" and "little stories big," in the final news package.

Most community affairs information is channeled through the city page. In many respects, the city editor's decisions are more significant than those of other community decision-makers. Products of his decisions represent varying degrees of the "real community" for most of its residents.

Common questions concerning the editor's important role have taken a different slant than those in this study of city editors' news values. The reader-wants-vs-reader-needs consideration was tabled, as well as considerations concerning good news-bad news, liberal-vs-conservative policies, etc. Debates on these topics have been deceptive and spurious, exceeding the bounds of news values, as such. They have centered on the concept of responsibility for what should be done. Concern seems hardly fruitful in a background of widespread confusion over what is being done--that is--over what news is.

## Objective

Essentially, this study sought to determine commonalities and variations of news values among 10 city editors who judged an identical input pool of hypothetical news stories that combined several combinations of news elements.[1] The elements represented three news dimensions, assumed to be salient to the editors' news values. This assumption was based on the study of 35 journalism textbooks and interviews with several newspaper editors.[2]

## Methods

News elements of the three-dimensional framework were defined, as follows:

A. SIGNIFICANCE: News of participation in an event by a large number of readers, or representing immediate impact, or potential impact, in the near future, on a large number of readers. Political, economic, social, psychological, and moral consequences are of concern here. Impact can be physical and-or psychological, but it must obviously be concrete, as opposed to the abstract.

a-1. Impact Element: Any physical or non-physical event in which a large number of readers participate--or which affects, now or in the near future, a large number of persons in the community. "Affect" is used in the impact frame. Impact can be damaging or enhancing.

a-2. Magnitude Element: Any physical or non-physical event in which a large number of persons attend, or which involves large gains, losses, expenditures or accomplishments. Magnitude is significant only from the quantitative point of view. It does not represent effect on a large number of readers, as does the impact element.

a-3. No Impact or Magnitude: Any physical or non-physical event which affects an obviously limited number of readers, and in which few or no readers participate. Very small gains, losses, expenditures or accomplishments are involved.

B. PROMINENCE: News involving any person or group or institution which has gained fame through inheritance, accomplishment, etc.

b-1. Known Principals Element: Known through repeated past publicity or position in society and-or community.

b-2. Unknown Principals: Unknown person, group or institution. No repeated publicity.

C. NORMALITY: Content involving Oddity, Conflict or Normal situations.

c-1. Oddity Element: Any action or event that is rarer than just the unusual (a murder is unusual, but not an oddity). Generally, the action or event has a "twist"--that is, it is different from the day-to-day turn of events...or opposite from what we've learned to expect, and, thus, predict in our culture and our time. Lack of precedent, generally, though not necessarily, is indicated.

c-2. Conflict Element: Any open clash between persons, groups, animals, or involving a clash with any of these three against nature. The clash can be either verbal or physical. The conflict must obviously be intense, with distinct "movement against" by one or both opposing forces.

c-3. Normal: Actions or events not unusual

enough to be considered an Oddity or
"movement against" that is intense
enough to be constituted as Conflict.

## News Element Combinations

The 3-D news framework produced 18 combinations of news elements. A sample of news stories was drawn to represent each combination. Furthermore, no sample story presumably contained a news element not included in the framework.

Most importantly, a few independently defined news elements, structured along Guttman's dimensional principles, provided a means to test any interactive effects.

In their recent book, Fundamentals of News Reporting, Izard, Culbertson and Lambert, testify to the need for a similar conceptualization of news.

Noting that several writers have looked for concepts which really make up the essence of news elements, these authors state that few have come up with clearer ways of talking about news judgment. They suggest that hurried newsmen may think in terms of a few underlying concepts, rather than 10 or 12 elements.[3]

Izard, et al, listed 10 news elements, emphasizing they are not universal: Proximity, timeliness, novelty, consequence, conflict, sensationalism, human interest, prominence, suspense, clarity and certainty. The authors hasten to point out the combined effects of specific elements and imply non-exclusiveness of others.

This was a crucial consideration in the present studies. Can a story comprise only the sensational news element? Such a story could contain the other nine elements listed above. Appropriately, Izard, et al, called attention to such loose conceptualization by urging more serious efforts to define news, in the hopes of strengthening intuitive news judgments.

## Selection of Editors

Since this exploratory study used a small number of editors who judged a larger, theoretically representative sample of news stories, diversity in respondents was paramount. The city editors reflected newspapers quite different in size, circulation, type of community and existing competition.

The newspapers covered eight states located in the South, Midwest and East. Their circulations ranged from 10,000 to 300,000 in communities from 10,000 to 1,000,000 population. The editors, themselves, ranged in age from 30 to 58 years, with city desk tenure from 3 months to 25 years. Seven held college degrees, five in journalism. One editor had some college; two had none.

The 10 local markets were characterized as: large industrial-agricultural; large diversified-industrial; large industrial-wholesale; large distribution center; small manufacturing; small agricultural-education; and one category with little agriculture or industry.

Varying degrees of competition challenged the editors from radio, television and other local or area newspapers. One large, metropolitan editor faced a larger daily in the same city.

## Measurement and Analyses

Since the 3-D framework had a relatively weak theoretical foundation, a creative, discovery-type design was needed. With a sample of news stories representing three news dimension elements, primary interest was in which single elements or combinations were most salient to the city editors' news judgments. In other words, generalization would be from a sample of news stories, rather than a sample of persons.

The city editors were asked to rank-order the sample of news stories along an 11-point, quasi-normal frequency distribution--the response variable being "probability of use," as shown in Table 1. Three stories were chosen to represent each of the 18 combinations of news elements, yielding a 54-story sample.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of 54 news stories, showing their assigned values.

| Least Probably Use | | | | | | | | Most Probably Use | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assigned Values | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Number of stories | 2 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 |

By subjecting the story sample (Appendix A) to the above distribution, news judgments of one city editor, or groups of editors, could be analyzed for their similarities and differences. Any variation of judgments in different newspaper environments could provide insights into the effects of those environments on the gatekeeper's decisions.[5]

To this end, editors rank-ordered the sample of news for their own newspapers, as well as for an hypothetical bad and ideal newspaper. The judging tasks were spaced at two to three-week intervals.

Similarities in News Judgments: Each editor's array of story rankings for each of the three newspaper environments were intercorrelated and factor analyzed.

This analysis revealed each editor's relative probable use of each news story, as well as the similarity among editors in the way they rank-ordered the stories.

Differences in News Judgments: After types of editors were established, variance analyses determined the influence of each news element, or combination of elements, across all editors and on each type of editor.

News stories were viewed as subjects in the usual type experiment. These "subjects" were distributed into rotating combinations of two news dimensions at a time, holding the third constant. Response of each type of editor to a particular pair of dimensions was considered a replicated response by each "subject" (news story) under different treatments (types of editors). Dependent variable was the mean probable use of news items by types of editors.[6]

## Hypotheses

Without a tested structure of the "universe of news," a hierarchy of news values was drawn from the textbook authors and exploratory interviews with former newsmen.

Complicating matters was the 3-D framework facility for determining cumulative and-or interactive effects of news elements. Most textbooks treat news elements as separate entities. Who can say, for example, Oddity is more valued than Known Principals when the combined effects of these two elements have never been quantitatively analyzed?

The theoretical array of 18 news element combinations in Table 2 are accompanied by their corresponding rank positions and mean probable use scores. The latter were derived from the assigned values in the quasi-normal distribution.

Mean probable use scores and rank positions in Table 2 suggest several cumulative effects of various news elements. Generally, the more news elements a story comprises, the higher its probable use. Exceptions are Oddity-Impact, Conflict-Impact and Impact, alone, which receive higher play than some stories which contain more elements than they.

Table 2. Theoretical array of news elements showing mean probable use score and the rank position of each element or combination of elements.

| News Elements | Rank Position | Mean Probable Use Score |
|---|---|---|
| Oddity + Known Principals + Impact | 1.0 | 10.7 |
| Oddity + Impact | 2.0 | 9.7 |
| Conflict + Known Principals + Impact | 3.0 | 9.0 |
| Conflict + Impact | 4.5 | 9.0 |
| Known Principals + Impact | 4.5 | 7.0 |
| Impact | 4.5 | 8.0 |
| Oddity + Known Principals + Magnitude | 6.5 | 7.0 |
| Conflict + Known Principals + Magnitude | 8.0 | 6.3 |
| Oddity + Known Principals | 9.5 | 6.0 |
| Oddity + Magnitude | 9.5 | 6.0 |
| Conflict + Known Principals | 11.0 | 5.7 |
| Conflict + Magnitude | 12.5 | 5.0 |
| Known Principals + Magnitude | 12.5 | 5.0 |
| Oddity | 14.5 | 4.0 |
| Conflict | 14.5 | 4.0 |
| Known Principals | 16.0 | 3.0 |
| Magnitude | 17.0 | 2.3 |
| No News Elements | 18.0 | 1.3 |

A "trial" variance analysis of the hypothetical mean scores in the above array suggests at least two hypotheses:

1. For every type of city editor, the mean probable use of news stories containing Impact, Magnitude, Oddity, Conflict or Known Principals would exceed the mean probable use of stories without those respective elements.

Impact > No Impact

Magnitude > No Magnitude

Oddity > Normal

Conflict > Normal

Known Principals > Unknown Principals.

2. For every type of editor, stories containing the Impact news element would receive highest mean probable use. Oddity would "play higher" than Conflict or Magnitude, but similar to Known Principals. Conflict--though valued more than Magnitude--would be played similarly to Known Principals. Magnitude and Known Principals would net similar probable use:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Impact | > | Oddity<br>Conflict<br>Known Principals<br>Magnitude |
| Oddity | > | Conflict<br>Magnitude |
| Conflict | > | Magnitude |
| Known Principals | ≈ | Oddity<br>Conflict<br>Magnitude |

Conspicuously absent in the hypotheses is any mention of variation in news judgments by different types of editors. The dearth of systematic evidence on this aspect of gatekeeper behavior further highlights the need for exploratory work.

However, prevalent theories of perception, plus the phenomenological notions of self-preservation and need satisfaction suggested that all 10 city editors would behave similarly in their news judgment "because they are newsmen in our culture and time." They also might differ because of different prior experiences and because different work-environment variables might be perceived as significant enough to alter prior assumptions.[8]

After weighing these "offsetting notions," following trends were expected, with stipulation that they be considered more as research questions:

1. Each editor's array of news judgments would correlate positively with those of every other editor's.
2. Though one type of editor might tend to prefer stories with a particular news element, his preference would not differ significantly with other editor types.
3. The "average editor's" array of news judgments--whether on his own, the ideal or bad newspaper--would correlate positively with the theoretical array of news elements.

Over-all, this initial test of the 3-D news framework--within its limitations--sought insights into: Which news dimension elements are most salient to what types of city editors under what kinds of newspaper environments?

# Findings

## Own Newspaper Judgments

Three types emerged from the 10 city editors' judgments. That is, editors in each type agreed more with each other's news judgments than with judgments of other editors.[9]

However, tendency of types to differ on probable use of various news elements was not significant. Indicative of homogeneity in news judgments was the nearly equal play given to 50 of 54 news stories. These consensus items were those which no type of editor deviated more than one standard score from any other type.

Table 3. High and low consensus items: Own newspaper

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Mean Standard Score |
|---|---|---|
| MOST PROBABLY USED BY ALL EDITORS | | |
| C-KP-I | Negroes Barred from School | 1.84 |
| O-I | Bridge Caves in: Turkeys Float | 1.81 |
| O-I | Santa Claus is Convict | 1.37 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | 1.35 |
| C-KP-I | Diamond Rubber May Close Doors | 1.33 |
| LEAST PROBABLY USED BY ALL EDITORS | | |
| N | Counselor Tours | -2.47 |
| N | Polka Club Dance | -2.39 |
| N | Grand Jury Foreman Named | -1.41 |
| C | Three Men Stabbed | -1.29 |
| O | Cows Charge Holiday Motorists | -1.13 |

Hereafter: I=Impact; O=Oddity; C=Conflict; KP=Known Principals; M=Magnitude; N=No news.

The five highest-and lowest-played consensus items in Table 3 show the editors agreed to play Impact items high and to bury those comprising single news elements or none at all. The "bannered" Impact items also comprised Oddity, or a combination of Conflict and Known Principals. This cumulative effect of news elements was built into the theoretical array.

For all editors, stories with Impact, Oddity, Conflict or Known Principal elements were played significantly higher than those without. This tendency also was evident for each type of editor (Table 4). Magnitude items were killed or buried throughout these studies.

Mean probable use of Impact stories was greater than

Table 4. Mean probable use of news elements across all editors and by each type on Own newspaper.

| | Mean Standard Score | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| News Elements | All Editors | Type I | Type II | Type III |
| Impact | .83 | .74 | .84 | .93 |
| No Impact | -.41 | -.37 | -.39 | -.47 |
| Oddity | .33 | .38 | .28 | .22 |
| No Oddity | -.15 | -.24 | -.11 | -.12 |
| Conflict | .26 | .13 | .38 | .28 |
| No Conflict | -.12 | -.06 | -.16 | -.15 |
| Known Principals | .25 | .14 | .34 | .27 |
| Unknown Principals | -.24 | -.14 | -.29 | -.29 |
| Magnitude | -.24 | -.22 | -.26 | -.22 |
| No Magnitude | .13 | .11 | .19 | .10 |

Differences as large as those between the mean standard scores of Oddity and No Oddity and Conflict and No Conflict news elements would occur by chance less than 1 time in 100 ($p < .01$). Differences between Known and Unknown Principals would occur by chance less than 5 times in 100 ($p < .05$) and between Impact and No Impact, less than 1 time in 1000 ($p < .001$).

for stories with any other element. Oddity, Known Principals and Conflict tended to receive about equal play.

Profile of Editor Types. Though the news elements statistically were equally meaningful to all editors, tendencies of types to differ merit discussion.

Type I editors preferred a "Soft news-Oddity" package. They played Oddity items higher than did other types (Table 5). Typifying this type was a veteran Pennsylvania editor's comment, "Nothing sells like a good human interest yarn."

Table 5. Items more highly accepted by Type I editors on their own newspapers.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-M | Twins Die | 1.19 |
| C | Husband Buys Phone Booth | .88 |
| O | Patrolman Nabs Own Wife | .87 |
| O-I | Santa Claus Is Convict | .86 |
| O-KP | Puppy Births | .82 |
| O-M | Woman Freed from Stables | .66 |
| O-M | Derelict Given $10,000 | .65 |

The average standard score differences are for items that Type I editors played higher than did Types II and III on the average. For example, the average standard score assigned to the "Twins Die" story by Types II and III was z - .22, while Type I gave this story an average z.97, making an average difference of z1.19.

A "Hard news, Big Name-Conflict" package characterized Type II editors, who played Conflict and Known Principals higher than did the other types (Table 6).

Indicative of Type II's pattern was their belief that crime and expose appealed most to the average reader. They

Table 6. Items more highly accepted by Type II editors on their own newspapers.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C | Estranged Husband Shoots Wife | .71 |
| C-KP-I | Negroes Barred from School | .67 |
| C-I | Teachers Discontinue Strike | .64 |
| C-M | Seven Persons Injured | .61 |
| C-KP-M | Author, Poet Dies | .53 |
| C-KP-M | Coroner Robbed | .52 |

played the Negro student civil rights story higher than did other types because--as an Illinois editor said--"It involves a national issue along with controversy."

Type III--the "Hard news-Impact" editors--tended more to "buy" stories having high impact on the community. Examples were their high play of the pork price rise and the city's power failure (Table 7).

Three Type III editors were more than 50 years old, with

Table 7. Items more highly accepted by Type III editors on their own newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-KP-M | Advertising Error; Big Bargain | .87 |
| C-KP | Bus. Mgr. Challenges Draft | .61 |
| KP-I | CORE Director Leaves | .59 |
| I | Pork Prices Rise | .55 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | .51 |
| KP-I | Rail Strike May Hurt Business | .50 |
| O-KP-I | Power Fails; City Blackout | .42 |
| C-KP-M | City's Tiff with Millionaire | .39 |

extensive reporting experience. They were the only editors who preferred writing over the editing phase of newswork. All faced stiff competition from other media and pressure from their own superiors. Some of these editors told of self-devised compromises to "buck policy."

## Bad Newspaper Judgments

Normally, an investigator cannot study a city editor's news values as the editor moves from one newspaper to another. To bridge this "occupational environment gap," a bad newspaper scenario[11] provided a makeshift background for the 10 city editors' second news judgment task.

Though three types of editors emerged from the bad newspaper, all substantially agreed on relative play of 32 of 54 news stories. The five highest and lowest consensus items in Table 8 represent elements similar to those on the Own newspaper.

A notable contrast from the top consensus items on the Own newspaper was the absence of the Negro student civil rights controversy, a highly sensitive topic which was buried on the bad newspaper.

Yet, even under the repressive bad environment, editors, over-all, played stories with Impact, Oddity and Known Principals significantly higher than stories without those elements (Table 9).

Table 8. High and low consensus items: Bad newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Mean Standard Score |
|---|---|---|
| MOST PROBABLY USED BY ALL EDITORS | | |
| C-KP-I | Diamond Rubber May Close Doors | 1.75 |
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | 1.22 |
| I | Firm Buys 100-Acre Site | 1.14 |
| KP-I | City Drops Atom-Smasher Race | 1.13 |
| O-KP-I | Power Fails; City Blackout | 1.11 |
| LEAST PROBABLY USED BY ALL EDITORS | | |
| N | Polka Club Dance | -2.21 |
| N | Grand Jury Foreman Named | -1.38 |
| C | Estranged Husband Shoots Wife | -1.28 |
| C | Three Men Stabbed | -1.23 |
| M | 20 Cars Derailed | -1.08 |

Table 9. Mean probable use of news elements across all editors and by each type on the bad newspaper.

| | Mean Standard Score | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| News Elements | All Editors | Type I | Type II | Type III |
| Impact | .40 | .23 | .24 | .73 |
| No Impact | -.21 | -.12 | -.12 | -.37 |
| Oddity | .36 | .33 | .34 | .41 |
| No Oddity | -.18 | -.17 | -.17 | -.21 |
| Conflict | .04 | -.05 | -.05 | .21 |
| No Conflict | -.02 | .02 | .02 | -.11 |
| Known Principals | .26 | .14 | .28 | .35 |
| Unknown Principals | -.26 | -.15 | -.28 | -.35 |
| Magnitude | -.05 | .08 | -.06 | -.16 |
| No Magnitude | .02 | -.05 | .03 | .08 |

The difference between the mean standard use of Impact and No Impact and between Known and Unknown Principals would tend to occur by chance less than 5 times in 100; between Oddity and no Oddity, less than 1 time in 100. The higher probable use of Impact by Type III editors would tend to occur less than 5 times in 100.

The bad news package differed most from the Own in the "killing" of Conflict and the relatively moderate play of

Impact stories. Probable use of Impact, itself, tended to hinge on the PROMINENCE dimension (Table 10).

Table 10. Mean standard scores showing interaction of PROMINENCE and SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements across all editors on the bad newspaper.

| SIGNIFICANCE News Elements | PROMINENCE Known Principals | News Elements Unknown Principals |
|---|---|---|
| Impact | .33 | .44 |
| No Impact | .20 | -.61 |

Differences between the mean standard probable use of the SIGNIFICANCE and PROMINENCE news dimension elements would occur by chance less than 5 times in 100.

Contributing most to higher play of Impact over no-Impact stories was the absence of Known Principals. The difference between the probable use of Impact and no-Impact without Known Principals was significantly greater (z.44 minus z-.61= z1.05) than that between Impact and no-Impact accompanied by Known Principals (z.33 minus z.20=z.13).

Further, Impact on the bad newspaper was played highest by Type III editors (Table 9). Their Impact stories (z .73) probably carried headlines at least 30 points larger than those of Types I and II. The relatively strong rejection of Magnitude by Type III editors contributed most to its burial.

Profiles of Editor Types. "Policy Pleasers" best characterized non-descript news judgments of Type I editors. They apparently over-reacted to the bad newspaper policy, daring only to give one news element (Oddity, z.33) even moderate play. Item analysis indicated a self-preservative "scale-balancing." Even mildly suspected anti-policy items received moderate to low play.

Eight of Type I's higher played stories reported non-controversial events mostly containing one news element (Table 11). Half these higher-played items contained "neutral-prone" Oddity and-or Magnitude elements.

Talbe 11. Items more highly accepted by Type I editors on the bad newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| M | Utility Company Refund | 1.17 |
| O-M | Twins Die | 1.05 |
| M | 180 Milk Samples | .93 |
| O | Husband Buys Phone Booth | .84 |
| C-KP | Ex-Gubernatorial Candidate Killed | .79 |
| M | 20 Cars Derailed | .76 |
| O-KP | Puppy Births | .74 |
| O | Cows Charge Holiday Motorists | .66 |

Type II editors differed from Type I only in the former's higher play of Known Principals. This second type comprised "Big Name Policy Pleasers," who headlined the city manager's salary raise and a municipal judge's election to a state fraternal association (Table 12).

Type III--the "All-around-Impact" Editors--produced a

Table 12. Items more highly accepted by Type II editors on the bad newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-KP-M | Error in Advertisement; Big Bargain | 1.74 |
| C-KP | Bus. Mgr. Challenges Draft | 1.48 |
| KP-M | Grand Jury Foreman Named | .96 |
| N | Counselor Tours | .92 |
| KP | Author, Poet Dies | .83 |
| I | Firm Buys 100-Acre Site | .72 |
| C-KP | City Patrolman Fired | .70 |
| KP | Judge Elected to Association | .69 |
| O-I | Bridge Caves In; Turkeys Float | .65 |

rich local news package headlined with Impact. Six of their higher-played stories contained Impact (Table 13). They also gave Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals bigger headlines, regardless of relevancy to policy. In fact, the Conflict-Known Principal-Impact story involving Negro students was bannerlined. The policy pleasers buried this story. Several harmless Magnitude items used by policy pleasers were discarded by Type III.

Table 13. Items more highly accepted by Type III editors on the bad newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C-KP-I | Negroes Barred from School | 2.84 |
| KP-I | CORE Director Leaves | 2.27 |
| O-KP-I | Loan Company Loses Files | 1.14 |
| C-I | Teachers Discontinue Strike | 1.06 |
| C-KP-M | City's Tiff with Millionaire | 1.05 |
| O-KP-M | General's Wife Hoards Sugar | .96 |
| O-I | Santa Claus Is Convict | .96 |
| O-KP-I | Computer Catnaps; Overcharges Residents | .91 |

These "All-around-Impact" editors obviously did not play the bad newspaper game, perhaps due to their sense of responsibility to the community.

One 58-year-old Pennsylvania editor--city desk chief for 25 years--said he disliked pressure from any source. He buried the newspaper's advertising error story in every case. "I always look for the general interest of a story," he said, "and advertising doesn't mix with news." This editor once crusaded against City Hall corruption which led to jailing the mayor and several other local officials.

Another veteran Type III editor said he played the game to a point on his job but he was looking for a position elsewhere.

"There are lots of sacred cows, here, and money 'rules the roost.' For example, about 20 per cent of the city is Negro. They live in slum dwellings mostly owned by bankers and a realtor who belong to the publisher's 'yacht-club set.' Nothing is said about these conditions."

On several occasions, this editor slugged stories which later were spiked by the publisher. One concerned a budget-cutting move by local officials that visibly affected the health of hundreds of residents.

"A good newspaperman could clean up situations around here," the editor said. "But it's hard to do with a publisher who is more interested in ad space than good reporting and worries about his image at the Rotary Club. I'll continue to send objectionable stories through."

## Ideal Newspaper Judgments

Presumably, this newspaper's city pages reflected the editors' "true" news values, since the ideal environment scenario (Appendix B) dealt the editors a free hand.

Relative probable use of news elements closely resembled that of the own newspaper. Forty-one of the 54 stories received about equal relative play. Four of the five highest- and lowest-played consensus items in Table 14 are identical to those in the own newspaper output (Table 3, page 23 ).

Table 14. High and low consensus items: Ideal newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Description | Mean Standard Score |
|---|---|---|
| MOST PROBABLY USED BY ALL EDITORS | | |
| C-KP-I | Negroes Barred from School | 1.72 |
| O-I | Bridge Caves In; Turkeys Float | 1.70 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | 1.60 |
| I | Firm Buys 100-Acre Site | 1.31 |
| O-I | Santa Claus Is Convict | 1.26 |
| LEAST PROBABLY USED BY ALL EDITORS | | |
| N | Polka Club Dance | -2.43 |
| N | Counselor Tours | -2.31 |
| N | Grand Jury Foreman Names | -1.58 |
| C | Three Men Stabbed | -1.49 |
| KP | Former Mayor Gets Arizona Post | -1.13 |

Over-all, news stories containing Impact, Oddity, Conflict

Table 15. Mean probable use of news elements across all editors and by each type on the Ideal newspaper.

| News Elements | Mean Standard Score<br>All Editors | Type I | Type II | Type III |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | .82 | .97 | .66 | .82 |
| No Impact | -.41 | -.49 | -.33 | -.41 |
| Oddity | .28 | .41 | .41 | .00 |
| No Oddity | -.41 | -.20 | -.21 | -.61 |
| Conflict | .25 | .20 | .14 | .42 |
| No Conflict | -.12 | -.10 | -.07 | -.21 |
| Known Principals | .21 | .23 | .24 | .17 |
| Unknown Principals | -.12 | -.23 | -.24 | -.17 |
| Magnitude | -.15 | -.16 | -.15 | -.14 |
| No Magnitude | .08 | .08 | .07 | .08 |

Differences between the mean standard scores of Impact and No Impact, Oddity and No Oddity, and Conflict and No Conflict would occur by chance less than 1 time in 1000, and between Known and Unknown Principals, less than 5 times in 100. Differences as large as those between the SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements, Impact and No Impact, for different types of editors, would occur by chance less than 5 times in 100 and between NORMALITY'S Conflict and No Conflict and Oddity and No Oddity elements, less than 1 time in 100.

or Known Principals were played significantly higher than those without, while Magnitude seemed to lower a story's appeal (Table 15).

Largest headlines on Impact stories were assigned by Type I editors (z.97), while Type III editors greatly affected over-all probable use of Oddity and Conflict stories. They valued Oddity less (z.00) and Conflict more (z.42) than did Types I and II.

Profile of Editor Types. Type I editors in the ideal environment were "Soft news-Impact." Having clustered with the hard-news types on their own newspapers, they placed a little less emphasis on Conflict and more on Oddity when given free reign on the ideal newspaper. Table 16 points up the "Soft news-Impact" pattern. Seven of the nine more-highly-played stories contained Impact, while six contained Oddity and-or Known Principals.

Table 16. Items more highly accepted by Type I editors on the ideal newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-KP-I | Loan Company Loses Files | 1.23 |
| O-KP-I | Power Fails; City Blackout | .90 |
| C-I | Vandals Spray-Paint Autos | .76 |
| C-KP-M | Gas Thieves Nabbed | .70 |
| O-KP-I | Computer Catnaps; Overcharges Residents | .66 |
| O-KP-M | General's Wife Hoards Sugar | .63 |
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | .62 |
| KP-I | CORE Director Leaves | .59 |
| O-I | Bridge Caves In; Turkeys Float | .56 |

A plain "Soft news" pattern best described the Type II editors' ideal city pages. Their more-highly-accepted stories carried a variety of news elements, except Impact and Conflict (Table 17).

Type III's ideal city pages portrayed a "Hard news Conflict" pattern. In Table 18, no Oddity items appear in the more-highly-accepted list. Four of the six contain Conflict. Although Magnitude was rejected as a whole by Type III editors, they tended to "buy" it in a few cases, mostly when it was combined with Conflict or Known Principals. All stories

Table 17. Items more highly accepted by Type II editors on the *ideal* newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-M | Woman Freed from Stable | 1.53 |
| KP-M | City Mgr.'s Salary Upped | 1.10 |
| O-KP | Motorcycle-Riding School Principal | 1.02 |
| KP | Author, Poet Dies | .97 |
| O-M | Derelict Given $10,000 | .88 |
| O-KP | Puppy Births | .77 |
| O-KP | Oldest Youth Leader Dies | .69 |
| O | Utility Company Refund | .59 |
| KP | Former Mayor Gets Arizona Post | .42 |

Table 18. Items more highly accepted by Type III editors on the *ideal* newspaper.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Standard Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C-KP-M | Coroner Robbed | 1.20 |
| C | Son Killed in Viet Nam | 1.04 |
| M | 180 Milk Samples | .97 |
| KP-M | Grand Jury Has Record Cases | .97 |
| C-M | Seven Persons Injured | .90 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | .74 |

containing the Oddity-Magnitude combination were played lower by Type III editors than by Types I and II.

Apparently, these editors took a "no-nonsense" approach to the news. They were impressed with the magnitude of Conflict, but not Oddity.

All these Type III editors saw politics and crime among the best read stories. Three cited routine murders as highly valued, strong reader attractions.

## Between Newspapers

Tantamount to news judgments in individual environments were the similarities and differences between newspapers.

Correlation of news story arrays, plus standard score analysis of individual items, pointed out specific differences in news packages, as the editors "moved" from their own--to the bad--to the ideal newspaper.

Despite differences, relationships between the probable use of items on different newspapers was moderate to high: between own and bad newspapers, r=.64; between own and ideal, r=.95; and between bad and ideal, r=.66, all $p < .001$ at df=52.

As the editors "moved" from their own to the bad newspaper, local pages tended to carry smaller headlines on Impact and Conflict stories, with larger heads on Known Principals--especially those which enhanced the image of public officials or were combined with a harmless Oddity angle. For example, the judge's election and a former mayor's out-of-state job were played much higher on the bad than on the own newspaper.

In the bad environment, editors seemed confused on how to play stories that might have been construed as contrary to policy. They played down definite anti-policy items. The Negro student story was a clear-cut case of burying anti-policy news. The editors "struck a compromise" on the city's tiff with a well-known millionaire, giving it moderate, but considerably lower, play than on their own or ideal newspapers.

Typifying this "compromise posture" on the repressive bad newspaper were a midwest editor's comments:

> In addition to suppressing news and abandoning your judgment of news, one of the worst things in this situation is that you are never sure where you stand. It's a matter of trying to guess the whims of other people instead of relying on your own judgment.
>
> So, putting myself in such a situation, my thinking would be more negative than positive. I would:
>
> 1. Avoid or play down controversial stories which might offend somebody or put some influential person in a bad light. Thus, the story about the millionaire mortician might be played down because it makes him look fickle, or the story about the general's wife might be omitted because it reveals her as greedy.
>
> 2. Be in a sweat whether certain stories would be interpreted favorably or unfavorably. For example, I weighted the ad error toward the "probable" side because I interpreted it as a "face-saving" and placating story. But is it? The ad manager might prefer to have no story about a mistake.

3. Play up innocuous stories which might please someone, such as the Polka Club story, and push "puffery" stories such as the one about the judge being elected head of a state association.

Those would be some of the effects, and the big differences, of course, would be in handling stories of social significance (civil rights, for instance), stories of conflict between influentials and the public welfare (such as banks holding public funds without paying interest on them), and the like.

Still, there would be some stories--such as the bridge collapse and the electric power failure, which--because they affect a lot of people and don't involve any of the publisher's prejudices--might be rated about the same in this paper as in a more ideal paper. And the trapped editor might perversely wish for a lot of stories of this type.

The editors came back in the ideal situation with local pages nearly identical to their own. Differences probably amount to no more than a 4-point decrease in the headlines of a few single-element Known Principal and Conflict stories.

Conflict and Impact elements were played higher and Known Principals lower on the ideal than on the bad newspapers. Conflict headlines in the ideal pages came mostly from Type III editors, while Type I accounted most for the Impact headlines.

One Type I editor from a large midwest daily elaborated on his preferences for Impact stories and further implied that Conflict stories get top play only if combined with Oddity and-or Impact:

> First, I give particular weight to stories about matters which directly and vitally concern a number of people. Thus, I gave the bridge and electric power stories top probability.
>
> Also, I rate stories high which I think have significance within the context of our time. I think anything relating, for instance, to race relations is fairly significant at this time. I rated the story about Negroes in the local school fairly high, as well as the story on the CORE director.
>
> I don't place high value on isolated crime stories--burglaries, stabbings in tavern brawls, etc.--unless the crime, itself, is of great enormity or has some unusual aspect. I'm more interested in the over-all aspect of crime, whether the streets are more or less safe, whether the public attitude toward crime is changing, etc.
>
> Maybe in smaller communities, where people are more likely to know one another, reports of individual crimes have more meaning.[12]
>
> I might say the same thing about traffic accidents. I think the over-all traffic picture--especially how to make the highways safer--is of vital concern. But I suspect the usual stories about one car bashing another is of minimal interest except to those directly concerned.

## Actual v. Theoretical News Judgments

Reliability of the three news dimension elements first required a substantial correlation of actual editors' news story array with the theoretical array (see Page 20). Correlative was each news element's influence on news judgments, including the cumulative effects of multi-element stories. No less important was internal consistency of items representing each of the 18 combinations of news elements.

On the average, the editors' news judgments showed a low-moderate to fairly-high relationship with the theoretical editor's. Moderate to fairly high relationship r=.74 and r=.69 occurred on the own and ideal newspapers, respectively. The bad newspaper package showed a low-moderate relation (r=.41) with the theoretical (all p. < .001, df=52).

Expected relative influence of each news element, except Magnitude, was supported in the own and ideal city pages. Stories with Impact, Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals were played significantly higher than those without. Magnitude was not particularly valued by any type of editor on any newspaper.

Impact, by far, was the most valued news element on the own and ideal newspapers. Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals were played about equally. Probable use of Oddity, then, was less than its theoretical second-place rank. Influence of Oddity, along with Impact and Conflict, depended on the type of editor on the _ideal_ newspaper.

The _bad_ newspaper's city pages differed substantially from the theoretical on several counts. Excepting the "rebel" Impact editors, Impact and Conflict were played lower than expected. This repressive environment was the only one in which Conflict failed to influence the editors' judgments. It was buried with Magnitude. Impact was demoted to a par with Oddity and Known Principals. Even Impact's relatively moderate play depended on its non-involvement with Known Principals and its greater appeal to the "rebel" editors.

The theoretical local pages, then, were reproduced most accurately by the 10 city editors working on their _own_ city desks. This similarity was illuminated by an informal item analysis. Only one item--a local man's death in Viet Nam--was played substantially higher[13] than expected. Two stories, involving vandalism and a railroad strike, were played lower.

Internal consistency of the above three stories, plus four others, were questionable in both the _own_ and _ideal_ news packages. That is, they were played higher or lower than "sister" items containing the same news element(s). The other "unreliable" stories involved a teachers' strike settlement, the city's tiff with a millionaire, and a murderer's life sentence--all more probably used than their "sister" items. The story of a pork price rise was played lower. This story might well have been played higher than expected, had the editors been judging the input during the summer of 1973 when price freezes on food were lifted by the Nixon Administration.

Deviations of the bad newspaper items further pin-pointed policy-pleasing behavior. Seven stories were over-played. Four involved Known Principal "fluffs." Two were harmless Magnitude items. Five of six lower-played items contained Impact, with combinations of Conflict and Known Principals. Among these were two civil rights stories, played more than two standard scores lower than expected.

Six of the 18 news element combinations on the bad newspaper pages carried "unreliable" stories. In only one case did they duplicate those of the own and ideal pages. Two stories involved lower play to "save faces" of public officials. The two civil rights stories were buried much deeper than comparable items. An ex-governor's death was overplayed, as were two harmless Magnitude items. The Viet Nam death was over-played on all newspapers. Apparently, the "business office musts" were as heavy as the news flow on the bad newspaper desk.

Revised Theoretical Array: The significant, but not unreproachable, relationship between the actual and the theoretical news packages called for some revision of the latter. Revision was based on the editors' average relative use of news elements (excluding Magnitude) across the own, bad and ideal newspapers. This included judgments made under the best, worst and own newsroom conditions.

Basically, the editors' average rank-order of news element combinations across all three newspapers nearly paralleled that on their own newspapers. The average difference was only .6 rank positions. The revised theoretical array in Table 19 also differs an average .6 rank positions from the original array.

Table 19. Original and revised theoretical rank-order of 12 news element combinations.

| News Elements | Original Rank Positions | Revised Rank Positions | Rank-Position Differences |
|---|---|---|---|
| C-KP-I | 3.0 | 1.0 | +2.0 |
| O-KP-I | 1.0 | 2.0 | -1.0 |
| O-I | 2.0 | 3.0 | -1.0 |
| C-I | 4.5 | 4.0 | + .5 |
| P-I | 4.5 | 5.0 | - .5 |
| I | 6.0 | 6.0 | |
| C-KP | 8.0 | 7.0 | +1.0 |
| O-KP | 7.0 | 8.0 | -1.0 |
| O | 9.5 | 9.5 | |
| KP | 11.0 | 11.0 | |
| C | 9.5 | 9.5 | |
| N | 12.0 | 12.0 | |

The revised array is based on a 60-item sample in which five items represent each of the 12 news element combinations. On an 11-point continuum, with $M$ =6.0 (S.D.=3.16), the items fall into a quasi-normal distribution. Qualitatively, the revised array generally represents the rank-order of editors' mean-probable-use scores after unreliable "sister" items were discarded.

The revised theoretical array presumes higher probable use of four news element combinations and lower play of three. Most notable, the Conflict-Known Principal and Impact-Conflict-Known Principal combinations are played one and two rank positions higher, respectively. Oddity-Known Principals-Impact, Oddity-Impact, and Oddity-Known Principals are played a rank position lower.

Major hypotheses remain the same. Impact is assigned top play, followed by nearly equal play of Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals. The theoretical editor plays stories *with* each news element higher than stories *without*. The more elements a story contains, the more probable its use, with possible exception of Conflict-Known Principals and Oddity-Known Principals which get less probable use than single-element Impact stories.

The revised array's presumed added predictive power depends greatly on more careful scrutiny of the elements. Until various levels of Known Principals, Impact, Conflict and Oddity are investigated and operationalized, variation in probable use of identical-element "sister" items will continue to contaminate the 3-D news framework.

In these studies, preliminary story judges had difficulty singling out stories comprising an "equal" amount of a news element or combinations thereof. Considering they had to deal with single-level news element definitions, the author was encouraged by the relatively few unreliable sample items in editors' news packages.

Obviously, Known Principals, which presently include persons, places and institutions, aren't equally influential. Conflict should comprise at least the physical and verbal levels. Oddity's influence seemingly depends on whether the story potentially damages a person's image--especially highly prominent persons. Impact--though a powerful self-sustaining element--calls for subdivision. Economic v. non-Economic Impact warrants consideration, as well as Immediate v. Potential Impact. The magnitude of Impact must be operationalized.

Further, Conflict and Oddity--presently elements of the NORMALITY dimension--cannot be combined for analysis. Originally, the author felt that Conflict-Oddity stories were too rare to be included in a normal distribution of news. Yet, assassinations of several prominent people, plus mass murders like those in the Sharon Tate home and the Chappaquiddick incident involving Senator Edward Kennedy, etc., can be accounted for only by a fourth news dimension. These relatively infrequent events comprise Impact, Known Principals, Oddity and Conflict.

The 3-D news framework can adequately predict over-all relative influence of its news elements, but a more precise prediction of cumulative effects requires experimental definitions of discrete news element levels. The task at least is dissertation-worthy.

## Summary in Comment

Adequate prediction of city editors' news judgment patterns are possible--given a common input of news comprising the SIGNIFICANCE, NORMALITY and PROMINENCE news dimension elements.

One SIGNIFICANCE element--Magnitude--did not aid prediction. In retrospect, Magnitude seems to be generic to all news. All stories contain Magnitude by varying degrees. Like the often-cited "human interest" news element, Magnitude is not exclusive. Any interesting story has human interest, just as any story that makes the news has Magnitude. This may explain the consistently "equal play" of Magnitude and No-Magnitude items. The dichotomy was verbal, not actual.

Empirically, the editors' news values probably were reflected best on their own newspapers. The bad and ideal newspaper scenarios portrayed extremely good and bad aspects of various newspapers.

The editors, themselves, and their work environments, were more diverse than their news judgments. Amount and type of education, experience, time on the job, size and type of community, religion, politics...none of these variables significantly affected news values. Yet, the editors voiced varying degrees of pressures, in, and concomitant dissatisfactions with, their work situations. All but one wanted a more "liberal" policy with less internal-external "meddling." All sought more in-depth coverage of community events.

On their own and ideal newspapers, the editors' judgment and accompanying comments were reminiscent of Breed's observations more than two decades ago that a reporter's conformity to policy is not automatic. Since staff subordinates tend to have more "liberal" attitudes than the publisher, they can invoke the norms to justify anti-policy writing.[14]

Apparently, journalism norms prevail at the city-desk. Single- and multi-element Impact stories were played higher, regardless of "business-office-musts." And Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals got nearly equal billing by editors.

Granted, if all editors were dealt an ideal free hand, some might play Oddity higher than Conflict or vice versa. But the tendency probably wouldn't be great. The editors, first and foremost, looked for Impact. Other elements were "window dressings" for Impact.

Further, the 3-D news elements probably have little if any interactive influence on the average working editor. With some exceptions, the more elements a story had, the higher its probable use. But no element's over-all probable use on the editors' own newspapers substantially depended on another element.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] Walter J. Ward, "News Values, News Situations and News Selection: An Intensive Study of Ten City Editors,"(unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1967.)

[2] In 1964, Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., George H. Gallup, Professor of Research, School of Journalism, University of Iowa, supervised the study of 35 textbooks and interviews with six former newspapermen. MacLean's analysis of more than 200 news value words were made available to the author. Additionally, four indepth interviews were conducted by the author with four other newsmen: Paul Snider, former slot man, *Peoria* (Ill.) *Journal-Star*; Paul Butler, former assistant city editor, *Newport News* (Va.) *Times-Herald*, James Alsbrook, former weekend city editor, *Louisville* (Ky.) *Courier-Journal*; and Robert Keffler, city editor, *Canton* (Ohio) *Repository*.

[3] Ralph S. Izard, Culbertson and Lambert, *Fundamentals of News Reporting* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company, 1971), pp. 149-168.

[4] William Stephenson's Q methodology served as a basis for the frequency distribution. Q-sorting is a method of rank-ordering objects along a flat, normal frequency distribution and assigning numbers to them. Any person can become a subject of detailed factor and variance analysis.

[5] Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., "Some Multivariate Designs for Communication Research," *Journalism Quarterly*, 42:614. (MacLean points out in Q-analysis that one needs not work in traditional terms of persons, tests and times, but may use any stimuli of a symbolic nature to elicit responses of theoretical interest, which might help us characterize a

person. News items are appropriate stimuli. As in the case of the present study, one also may substitute for time any environmental variation, such as type of newspaper, which might lead systematically to differences in the editors' responses to the news items.)

[6] E.F. Lindquist, *Design and Analysis of Experiments in Psychology and Education*. (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956), pp. 281-285. (Variance analysis was a modification of Lindquist's Type III, three-factor, A-B-C mixed design with repeated measures on one factor." A" was the type of editors administered to the same subjects, news items comprising rotating combinations of two news dimension elements. Main effects of news dimension elements and interactions were "between effects" while the main effects of types of editors and their interactions with news dimension elements were "within effects.")

[7] Though the actual variance analysis required a mixed factorial and correlated variance design, the author ran an informal three-factor randomized test to get some notion of mean scores in the theoretical array. Thus, because the "trial" analysis produced a spurious between groups error variance, the author felt safe only in hypothesizing main effects of news dimension elements, leaving interactive effects open to exploration.

[8] Floyd H. Allport, *Theories of Perception and the Concept of Structure* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1955), pp. 240-247; William H. Ittelson and Hadley Cantril, *Perception: A Transactional Approach* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1954), pp. 7-23; Hans Toch and Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., "Perception, Communication and Educational Research: A Transactional View," *Audio-Visual Communications Review*,

10:58 (1962); Donald Snygg and Arthur W. Combs, Individual Behavior (New York: Harper & Bros., 1949), pp. 187-214.

[9] Each editor on each of three newspapers in Study No. 1 was assigned to the type with which he had the highest positive factor loading in the Thurstone simple structure matrix.

[10] A Standard score, or z-score, represents a comparable measure of the degree to which a news items was viewed as one for probable use by all three types of editors. Any story with a standard score of 1 or more was considered as one for high probable use, while those with z-score of -1 or less was considered a "filler" item. Those in between were viewed as receiving moderate play. The reader should note that z-scores from a forced distribution of items do not meet the assumption of random sampling or assignment or independence. However, editors were told to feel free to change their ranking of any item at will.

[11] "Scenario" is not used in the usual sense to represent a written plot and arrangement of incidents in a motion picture. Comprehensive "scenarios" (reproduced in Appendix B) described various political, economic and social-psychological aspects of the bad and ideal newspapers. These were created from responses to four 22-item questionnaires, stating various aspects of four actual newspapers, as described by preliminary study respondents who had manned the city desks of those newspapers.

[12] Such differential play of Conflict was not evident in this study. However, all editors received the same representative sample of news. In some "real" communities, Conflict may get higher play, simply because of the narrow scope of news to report. Also, in some small communities, Conflict may be considered Oddity, as well as Conflict.

[13] Criterion for "substantially higher" and "lower," as used here, was an arbitrary cut-off point of one z-score, plus or minus. If the actual probable use of an item exceeded its hypothetical probable use by one or more z-scores, it was considered played higher or lower, depending on the z-score direction. The same criterion was used to decide each item's consistency with its hypothetical comparable items.

[14] Warren Breed, "Social Control in the News Room," Mass Communications (Urbana, Ill., University of Illinois Press, 1960), p. 178.

# A Memorandum on Rhetoric

There is a durable, popular saying in journalism that if a man bites a dog, it's news. Gilmore and Root suggest that perhaps this one-dimensional definition subtly influences what American readers expect of their newspapers.* The mythical man and dog, they add, becomes, at a more sophisticated level, the idea that news is conflict.

"What, afterall, is news?" they ask, adding: "There is no more critical question for the editor to consider....The concept 'news,' like the concepts 'mental health' or 'spirituality' is more easily recognized than precisely described."

This crucial point strikes at the heart of confusion about news. The 3-D news framework indicated the one-dimensional, "my gosh!" definition of news is superficial. News, at the very least, must be described in three dimensions. Because news usually is "explained," not described, its multi-dimensional structure escapes attention.

These gatekeeper studies, hopefully, help clarify what news is, in terms of structure, not what it should be, in the eyes of individual beholders. News is not as complete as we'd like, nor as inadequate as our selective senses lead us to believe.

Charges of slanting, sensationalizing, neglect, bias, etc., often seem linked--one-to-one--with news values, per se. The charges come, in part, from special interests and accompanying assumptions that "this is just as important as the other stuff, so why wasn't it given more recognition?"

Concerned groups may "mentally" bannerline, say, a single-element Impact story. But the editor treats it in relation to other stories. A Conflict-Known Principal-Impact story may get the top play. The editor's decision is clear-cut, underserving of criticism. Perhaps on a slower news day, a single-element Impact story would have been the lead. But the reader may spot the Conflict element in the top story. His memory, often, is as selective as his perception. The charge? "Conflict! That's all they'll print!"

City editors in these studies provided much added insight into news values. Their news holes were unlimited. Several said the 54-story input presented a tough challenge. It posed the problems of heavy days, light days and of those in between. With this heavy, "composite" news flow, it wasn't a matter of pitting two top stories against 10 or 15 mediocre ones. In terms of news elements, the editors had to decide the relative probable use of "sister" stories, as well as many levels of "cousin" stories in the family news tree. Fine-line decisions were taxed at every turn.

Given this "representative" sample of news and enough space, the gatekeepers showed a judgmental consistency on their own and ideal newspapers that defies much popular rhetoric.

What was the probable use of Conflict, alone? Oddity, alone? Known Principals, alone? What happened to sensationalism (whatever it is)? Fluff? The unusual?

Simply this. They either tied in with Impact, or with each other, to earn top- or middle-priority slots, or they were used as squibs.

News to the editor is Conflict. It is big names. It is the unusual. But most of all, it's what the public needs to know: information of significance to their daily enterprise of living. The SIGNIFICANCE news dimension element is Impact.

One cooperating editor from a large metropolitan daily in stiff competition with another daily, put it this way:

> One thing, I think, is often under-emphasized by those who choose what to publish: By his selection and play of news, an editor is, in effect, saying, "This is what I consider important." And thus, to the extent his paper has influence, he is affecting the judgments of his readers as to what is important.
>
> I don't mean to say that "reader interest" can be ignored or to lose cognizance of the fact that a juicy sex scandal might sell more papers than a think piece on local government or the anti-poverty war. The real challenge is to make the important also interesting.

Slanting, biasing and neglect of needed information are not denied. They exist and require discourse. But such discourse must be backgrounded with a fuller understanding of existing news structure. Only then can the import of deficiencies also be understood.

## FOOTNOTES

*Gene Gilmore and Robert Root, Modern Newspaper Editing (Berkeley, Calif., The Glendessary Press, Inc., 1971), pp. 109-125.

# Study No. 2: Ten Oklahoma City - News Gatekeepers Judge Hypothetical and Localized Input

Three years after Ward's work with 10 city editors, L. Edward Carter, then instructor at Oklahoma State University's School of Journalism and Broadcasting, again carried the 3-D news framework to the field.[1]

Carter worked with city editors and their respective top local reporters in five Oklahoma cities: Ardmore, Enid, Lawton, Midwest City and Tulsa. The papers' circulations ranged from 12,000 to 285,000 in communities with populations from 20,000 to 366,000.

To check reliability of the 3-D framework, Carter used 24 news items from Ward's hypothetical input--two to represent each of the 12 news element combinations.[2] The newsmen ranked the stories along a seven-point frequency distribution, instead of an 11-point.

Carter then localized the hypothetical Middleport items with names of local people, places and institutions for each of the five cities. The two stories below illustrate transformation of an hypothetical Oddity-Known Principal-Impact story for the Tulsa community:

> (Hypothetical). Middleport has a good chance of being the angriest city in the nation tomorrow when residents receive their quarterly water bills. A "delinquency fee" will appear on each statement.
>
> However, there's a happy note to the story. "A computer finally has been caught cat-napping," said Russ Poole, city manager. "It was late in getting out the statements, so it automatically registered the bills overdue."
>
> There's nothing the city can do about it now, Poole said. "Naturally, the delinquent fees won't have to be paid. Everyone should simply deduct the delinquency charge before sending in payment."
>
> x x x
>
> (Localized). Tulsa has a good chance of being the angriest city in the nation tomorrow when residents receive their monthly water bills. A "delinquency fee" will appear on each statement.
>
> However, there's a happy note to the story. "A computer has finally been caught cat-napping," said Mayor J.M. Hewgley, Jr. "It was late in getting out the statements, so it automatically registered the bills as overdue," Hewgley said. "Naturally, the delinquent fees won't have to be paid. Everyone should simply deduct the delinquency charge before sending in payment."

Carter prepared 120 of these localized stories--24 for each city--which the gatekeepers judged one month after they assembled the hypothetical news packages.

This "replicated" study posed several questions about the 3-D framework's generalizability:

1. Over-all, would the editors of a predominantly agricultural southwestern state judge the news similarly to the 10 previous city editors from eight different states, several highly industrialized?
2. Would these Oklahoma editors play each localized story similarly to its hypothetical counterpart? If so, this would add support to the notion that news can be viewed in terms of a simpler framework of three independent news dimension elements. Each member story in the "universe of daily news," then, could be described more meaningfully by its framework components without much loss.
3. Would the local pages of each Oklahoma editor show more resemblance to his reporter's pages than to those of other editors and reporters?
4. Or, would the five editors tend to view the news differently than do the reporters?

Question Nos. 3 and 4 center on the influences of different role positions of editors and reporters in different on-the-job and community environments. Do these factors differentially affect local news output in our culture and time?

Partial answers to the above questions were paramount to 3-D framework's "contract renewal" for future gatekeeper studies.

Analysis: Essentially, this and the following three studies were analyzed similarly to Ward's data from the 10 city editors. First, inter-gatekeeper correlations were computed on the relative probable use of news items. A minor difference in these "replicated" studies involved elementary linkage analysis[3] of inter-correlations to determine which gatekeepers were most alike, yet different from others, in their news evaluations. Variance analyses to determine the relative influence of each news dimension element, or combination of elements, on news judgment was identical to Ward's (see Page 18).

Hypotheses: The theoretical relative probable use of news elements in all the studies were the same as those in the "Original Rank Positions" column of Table 19, Page 56.

Accompanying hypotheses and research questions on Pages 33-36 were inherent to the theoretical array and were retained throughout these exploratory efforts. The "Revised Rank Positions" column of Table 19 suggests minor alterations of the original theoretical array of news element combinations. These revisions, however, were formulated after all the studies herein were completed.

## Findings

Generally, local pages of the Oklahoma newsmen showed a marked similarity to the 10 city editors' own newspaper pages in Ward's study.

Inter-task correlations[4] (Table 20) indicate that the rank-order of the 24 news items was similar for all gatekeepers in all situations surrounding the Carter and Ward studies. This over-all similarity did involve some distance variation between story positions by types of gatekeepers, as later discussed.

Table 20. Inter-correlations of relative probable use of 24 news items by 10 city editors on their own newspapers in Ward's study and by 10 Oklahoma gatekeepers in hypothetical- and localized-story judgment tasks.

| | Oklahoma Newsmen: Hypothetical Sort | Oklahoma Newsmen: Localized Sort |
|---|---|---|
| Ward Study of 10 city editors: own newspapers | r=.86 | r=.90 |
| Oklahoma Newsmen: Localized stories | r=.85 | |

Product-moment coefficients as large as .85, .86 or .90 probably exceed zero 99 times in 100 for df=22.

However, even with the small number of stories, differences in the over-all local news-element treatment among gatekeepers in the Carter and Ward studies probably would be evident only to a trained and critical observer.

## Probable Use of Hypothetical Stories

All Oklahoma gatekeepers agreed on the probable use of 13 of the 24 hypothetical news items. Various combinations of Known Principals, Conflict and Impact were top-played consensus items[5] (Table 21), while two no-news and a Known Principal puffery item were placed inside, below the fold.

Table 21. High and low hypothetical consensus items of Oklahoma gatekeepers.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Mean Probable Use |
|---|---|---|
| MOST PROBABLY USED BY ALL GATEKEEPERS | | |
| O-KP-I | Power Fails; City Blackout | 6.05 |
| C-KP-I | Diamond Rubber May Close Doors | 6.05 |
| C-I | Cut-rate Stations Padlocked | 5.05 |
| LEAST PROBABLY USED BY ALL GATEKEEPERS | | |
| N | Polka Club Dance | 1.00 |
| N | Counselor Tours | 1.30 |
| KP | Former Mayor Gets Arizona Post | 1.80 |

Average probable use of news elements was similar to that in Ward's study. Items with Impact received top play (M=4.87, Table 22), followed by the near equally-valued Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals. Stories with each news element were preferred over those without--Impact, significantly so.

The over-all influence of the NORMALITY dimension's Oddity element differed for the two types of newsmen found in the linkage analysis. In Table 22, Oddity's higher play came mostly from Type I's headlines (M=4.78). Type II newsmen cared little if a story contained Oddity (M=3.85) or not (M=4.11).

*Profiles of Gatekeeper Types:* Those items played at least one mean score higher by one type of gatekeeper than the other were considered "more highly accepted" enough to show a distinguishing news judgment pattern.

Type I's preference for Oddity appears in six of their eight more highly accepted items (Table 23). The five editors

Table 22. Mean probable use of hypothetical story elements across all Oklahoma gatekeepers and by types.

| News Elements | All Gatekeepers | Type I | Type II |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | 4.87 | 4.77 | 4.98 |
| No Impact | 3.18 | 3.32 | 3.07 |
| Oddity | 4.28 | 4.78 | 3.85 |
| No Oddity | 3.90 | 3.68 | 4.11 |
| Conflict | 4.23 | 4.10 | 4.33 |
| No Conflict | 3.93 | 4.01 | 3.87 |
| Known Principals | 4.27 | 4.28 | 4.32 |
| Unknown Principals | 3.78 | 3.80 | 3.73 |

The difference between the probable use of SIGNIFICANCE news elements Impact and No Impact would tend to occur by chance less then 5 times in 1,000. Differences between NORMALITY'S Oddity and No Oddity elements and types of gatekeepers would tend to occur less than 2½ times in 100.

and three reporters in this "Oddity news" type probably indented and boxed the single-element "Woman Freed" item just above the front-page fold.

"Hard news-Impact" characterized Type II's local pages. These two reporters liked news affecting the community's

Table 23. Hypothetical items more highly accepted by Type I Oklahoma gatekeepers

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C-KP | Patrolman Fired | 2.5 |
| O | Woman Freed | 2.1 |
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | 1.9 |
| O-I | Santa Claus is Convict | 1.3 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | 1.3 |
| O | Derelict Given $10,000 | 1.3 |
| O-KP-I | Computer Catnaps; Overcharges Residents | 1.1 |

pocket-book, especially if they involved Known Principals and-or Conflict elements, as indicated by four of their six more highly accepted stories in Table 24.

Table 24. Hypothetical items more highly accepted by Type II Oklahoma gatekeepers.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| KP-I | City Drops Atom-Smasher Race | 1.7 |
| C | Seven Persons Injured | 1.5 |
| KP-I | Rail Strike | 1.4 |
| I | Firm Buys 100-Acre Site | 1.1 |
| C-KP | Coroner Robbed | 1.0 |
| C-KP-I | Diamond Rubber May Close Doors | 1.0 |

## Probable Use of Localized Stories

Dealing with the same events, but involving local persons, places and institutions, the Oklahoma newsmen agreed on relative play of 18 of 24 news items, five more than in their hypothetical story judging. The three highest- and lowest-played consensus items (Table 25) are identical to the hypothetical list (Table 21, Page 76), except the Computer story replaces the crackdown on Cut-Rate Gas Stations, which was a fifth-ranked consensus item in this localized package.

Over-all, Oddity wielded greater influence in the localized news package--on a par with Impact. Conflict and Known Principals got lower, but similar local page slots. All news elements tended to make a difference in a story's treatment, especially Oddity and Impact (Table 26).

As in the hypothetical-story judging, the gatekeepers disagreed on the treatment of Oddity news. Type I filled

Table 25. High and low localized consensus items of Oklahoma gatekeepers.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Mean Probable Use |
|---|---|---|
| MOST PROBABLY USED BY ALL GATEKEEPERS | | |
| O-KP-I | Power Fails; City Blackout | 6.25 |
| C-KP-I | Diamond Rubber May Close Doors | 5.85 |
| O-KP-I | Computer Catnaps; Overcharges Residents | 5.00 |
| LEAST PROBABLY USED BY ALL GATEKEEPERS | | |
| N | Polka Club Dance | 1.00 |
| N | Counselor Tours | 1.10 |
| KP | Former Mayor Gets Arizona Post | 2.55 |

Table 26. Mean probable use of localized story elements across all Oklahoma gatekeepers and by types.

| News Elements | All Gatekeepers | Type I | Type II |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | 4.66 | 4.70 | 4.68 |
| No Impact | 3.37 | 3.38 | 3.36 |
| Oddity | 4.73 | 5.18 | 4.30 |
| No Oddity | 3.66 | 3.48 | 3.89 |
| Conflict | 4.18 | 3.93 | 4.50 |
| No Conflict | 3.94 | 4.10 | 3.79 |
| Known Principals | 4.20 | 4.30 | 4.16 |
| Unknown Principals | 3.83 | 3.78 | 3.88 |

A difference as large as that between the SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements, Impact and No Impact, would tend to occur by chance less than 2½ times in 100. Differences between NORMALITY'S Oddity and No Oddity elements and type of gatekeeper would tend to occur less than 5 times in 100. Differences between NORMALITY'S Oddity and No Oddity elements and type of gatekeeper would tend to occur less than 2½ times in 100.

front-page holes with stories of Oddity (M=5.18, Table 26), but gave below-average play to items without Oddity (M=3.48). Type II played stories with and without Oddity inside, giving only slightly larger headlines to Oddity (M=4.30).

Profiles of Gatekeeper Types: Judgments of the two newsmen types were similar to the hypothetical-story situation. The more highly accepted items of Type I "Oddity news" gatekeepers nearly duplicate Type I's pattern in the hypothetical situation. In fact, the top four preferred items in Table 27 also appear in Table 23, as Type I's preferred hypothetical stories. These same three editors and one reporter produced "Oddity news" pages in both the hypothetical and localized packages.

Table 27. Localized items more highly accepted by Type I Oklahoma gatekeepers

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | 3.1 |
| C-KP | City Patrolman Fired | 1.3 |
| O | Woman Freed from Stable | 1.3 |
| O-KP-I | Computer Catnaps; Overcharges Residents | 1.0 |
| O-KP | General's Wife Hoards Sugar | 1.0 |

The localized news of Type II newsmen differed from their hypothetical pages mostly in higher play of Conflict. They resembled the "Hard news-Conflict" type as shown by their more highly accepted items in Table 28. Though their lower play of localized Oddity stories distinguished Type II from Type I, both types valued localized Impact equally. Type II, however, tended to play Impact higher than any element. Two of their top three preferred items contained Impact.

Two editors left the hypothetical "Oddity news" type to join their reporters who remained with Type II. Conversely, two reporters split from their hypothetical "Oddity news" editors to join the localized "Hard news-Conflict" gatekeepers.

Table 28. Localized items more highly accepted by Type II Oklahoma gatekeepers.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C | Seven Persons Injured | 1.7 |
| I | Firm Buys 100-Acre Site | 1.3 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | 1.2 |
| C | Holiday Death Toll | 1.0 |
| KP | City Manager's Salary Upped | 1.0 |

## Actual v. Theoretical Judgments

Oklahoma gatekeepers' news packages were more like Ward's 10 city editors' than the theoretical editor's. Their probable use of hypothetical and localized stories correlated r=.76 and r=.68, respectively, with the theoretical editor; but r=.86 and r=.96 with Ward's city editors.

In both news packages, the Oklahoma newsmen played single-element Oddity items, as well as the Known Principal city manager's salary hike, higher than expected. They played the Oddity-Known Principal-Impact computer foul-up story considerably lower than expected.

## Summary

This study provided further evidence that the three news dimensions--SIGNIFICANCE, NORMALITY and PROMINENCE--are salient to news judgments. The hypothetical and localized news packages nearly duplicated each other, as well as the package produced by the 10 city editors from 8 other states three years previously.

The significant, but lower, relationship between judgments of the Oklahoma newsmen and the theoretical editor substantiated needed revisions in the theoretical array.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] Lorenzo Edward Carter, "News Values of Editors-Reporters on Five Oklahoma Newspapers," (unpub. Master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1970). Carter, a former city editor of the Lawton (Okla.) Constitution, now is assistant professor of journalism, University of Oklahoma. To keep discussion throughout this volume consistent with the original studies, Carter was generous in permitting us to extend the scope and interpretation of his data. This was simply for purposes of consistency.

[2] Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 583. (For statistical stability and reliability, samples of items in a Q-distribution should not be less than 60, or 40 to 50 in rare cases. The small N in this exploratory study resulted from the limited number of hypothetical items that could be localized for each of the Oklahoma communities. The reader should note the potentially large error in variance estimate due to the small N.

[3] L. McQuitty, "Elementary Linkage Analysis for Isolating Orthogonal and Oblique Types and Typal Relevancies," Educational and Psychological Measurement, XVII (1957), pp. 207-229. (As one of the most objective tools available, McQuitty's method identifies clusters of persons, tests, etc., through the size of correlation coefficients. In the present studies, "types" refer to clusters of gatekeepers whose news values are more like each other's than like those gatekeepers in any other cluster.

[4] Editors judged 54 stories for their own newspapers in the Ward study. Their mean probable use of the 24 items corresponding to those used by Carter were extracted for inter-task correlations.

[5] Consensus items in this and the following studies were those in which the types of gatekeepers deviated no more than one mean probable use score.

# Study No. 3: Oklahoma Wire Service Newsmen File Priority News Element Priorities

During World War II, Kurt Lewin originated the gatekeeper concept from his social-psychological investigations of how food traveled from retail outlets to the family table.[1]

Observing food-purchasing habits of housewives, Lewin presented a "channel theory" of how food moves step-by-step through a channel with different patterns for each item and each path.

Food does not move by its own impetus, Lewin wrote, adding that the gatekeeper affects its entrance into, and movement within, a channel.

The gatekeeper concept in mass communication came with Lewin's point that the theory held for news flowing through certain communication channels. White followed up with the first case study of one wire desk gatekeeper in 1951.[2]

Referring to Lewin's step-by-step notion of news flow, Carter suggested--in concluding his city editor-reporter studies--that wire service gatekeepers be observed.

"These wire service newsmen function as gatekeepers for a whole state," Carter wrote. "They collect top news from across the state, then write, edit and relay this news over state wires to subscribing newspapers, radio and television stations. Do these wire service newsmen have a similar hierarchy and consistency of news values?"[3]

George R. Rhoades, former United Press International wire service reporter in Tulsa, Okla., followed Carter's suggestion in his study of 14 wire service bureau men in Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Seven were with the Associated Press bureau and seven with United Press International.[4]

Several past studies, Rhoades noted, emphasized the important role of wire service gatekeepers, but implied a relative passive role for client-newspaper telegraph editors. General contention seemed to be that news to the wire editors of client newspapers was what the wire service bureau men said it was.

Using Carter's and Ward's 3-D news framework, Rhoades asked: "What do wire service newsmen say is news? What are their priorities of newsworthiness? What relative influences would the three news dimension elements have on decisions of what to file for client newspapers?"

## Method

A 48-story pool was compiled (Appendix C), four representing each of Carter's 12 news element combinations.[5] Stories were rank-ordered on a seven-point scale from "Highest" to

"Lowest Priority." The "priority" response variable seemed more appropriate than "probable use," since wire service bureaus only *file* a hierarchy of news stories--not actually "treat" them for final pages.

Where possible, the 48-item input comprised actual news stories that appeared recently in client newspapers. *For the first time, then, gatekeepers were judging stories with the same three dimensions of news elements as those used by Carter and Ward, but events were different and "truly localized."*

Following is one example of how Rhoades matched an actual story with a combination of three news elements: Story A is one of Ward's hypothetical Conflict-Known Principal-Impact items. Story B, used by Rhoades, is the "same sister" item, with a different topic.

> STORY A. Three Negro students from the North High School District were barred from entering the new Fairlawn District High School this morning.
>
> Middleport School Superintendent Bryon Hawks said the students could not transfer to Fairlawn because they did not live in that district.
>
> Students who do live in the Fairlawn District formerly attended the integrated North High School before the new Fairlawn School was opened this year. No Negroes live within bounds of the newly-formed Fairlawn District.
>
> Fairlawn residents, for the most part, comprise higher income families of Middleport.

> STORY B. Dr. J. Herbert Hollomon resigned today as president of the University of Oklahoma with a parting blast at Gov. Dewey Bartlett.
>
> Hollomon had been under fire from Bartlett and others since the student anti-war demonstrations at OU last May, but OU regents voted last month to extend his contract for another year.

## New Research Questions

Regarding the 3-D news framework's stability, Rhoades' hypotheses and research questions were identical to those of Ward and Carter. Further, two new research questions arose with the buildup of data:

1. What is the relationship between Oklahoma wire service newsmen's "priority" of news elements and the 10 city editors' (Ward study) "probable use" of same for their own newspapers? This analysis put the three news dimension elements to their most rigid test. Ward worked with city editors from eight states, none from Oklahoma. The stories reported local events in the hypothetical city of Middleport. Rhoades, for the most part, used actual stories, working with wire service newsmen from one state. The only common input was the underlying news elements.
2. What is the relationship between the wire service newsmen's news element priority and the Oklahoma city gatekeepers "probable use" of same. This was a less stringent, but meaningful,

> test of the 3-D elements. Carter worked with 10 city gatekeepers from the same state as the wire service newsmen worked. But in one case, he used the hypothetical Middleport stories. He localized the events for the second judging task.

In essence, Rhoades' study represented the first departure from hypothetical events and-or persons, places and institutions. The news elements would have to stand or fall on their own, without support or devaluation from the heretofore common topics.

## Findings

Oklahoma AP and UPI newsmen *filed* a news element budget similar to the *probable use* of the same elements by the city-desk gatekeepers in the Carter and Ward studies.

Rank-order of news items by the various gatekeeper groups was regarded as substantial, even with the small number of cases, when one considered the lack of homogeneous story topics and city-desk job roles. Inter-task correlations (Table 29) strengthened the notion that any level of news decisions in mass media channels could be explained better by a framework of a few news elements.

Even the most casual reader probably could discuss the differences between local and state wire news, in terms of topics. But, again, only a trained and critical observer would note that news has a similar framework of elements, whether it comes through the wire service branch line or the city-desk gate.

Table 29. Intercorrelations of relative priority of 24 news items between Oklahoma wire service newsmen and probable use of those items by city editors and reporters in the Carter and Ward studies.

| | Rhoades' study of 14 Oklahoma AP and UPI Newsmen |
|---|---|
| Ward Study of 10 city editors: Own Newspapers | $r = .87\ (p < .01)$ |
| Carter study of 10 Oklahoma city editors & reporters: Hypothetical sort | $r = .76\ (p < .01)$ |
| Carter study of 10 Oklahoma city editors & reporters: Localized sort | $r = .79\ (p < .01)$ |

As previously discussed, it was possible to match item pairs for correlation between the Carter and Ward studies. Rhoades, however, used four, not two. items to represent each of the 12 news element combinations. Further, his topics were different, in most cases. Therefore, two priority scores were randomly chosen from each of Rhoades' 12 sets of 4 items to accomplish matched pairs with Ward and Carter.

## News Element Priorities

The AP and UPI newsmen gave similar relative priority to 47 of the 48 state-wide news stories. They logged the widest consensus, or inter-judge correlations, of any group.

The three highest-and lowest-priority consensus items in Table 30 comprised a combination of Conflict, Known Principals and Impact--very similar to the "agreeable mix" of news elements in the Ward and Carter studies.

Over-all, Impact characterized the top-filed state wire news, trailed by Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals (Table 31). All news elements significantly boosted a story's value.

Table 30. High and low consensus items: Oklahoma wire service newsmen.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Mean Priority of Use |
|---|---|---|
| HIGHEST PRIORITY BY ALL WIRE SERVICE NEWSMEN | | |
| C-KP-I | Political Candidates' Runoff | 7.0 |
| C-KP-I | College Head Resigns | 7.0 |
| C-KP-I | Congress Seat Lost | 6.5 |
| LOWEST PRIORITY BY ALL WIRE SERVICE NEWSMEN | | |
| N | Do-Si-Do Dance | 1.0 |
| N | First Horse Entry | 1.1 |
| N | Counselor Tours | 1.1 |

Table 31. Mean priority of news elements across all Oklahoma wire service newsmen and by AP and UPI types.

| News Elements | All Newsmen | AP | UPI |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | 4.98 | 5.10 | 4.90 |
| No Impact | 3.07 | 3.03 | 3.12 |
| Oddity | 4.38 | 4.38 | 4.43 |
| No Oddity | 3.85 | 3.91 | 3.80 |
| Conflict | 4.35 | 4.35 | 4.73 |
| No Conflict | 3.86 | 3.93 | 3.83 |
| Known Principals | 4.37 | 4.33 | 4.42 |
| Unknown Principals | 3.68 | 3.80 | 3.60 |

Differences as large as those between the mean priority of the PROMINENCE news dimension elements, Known and Unknown Principals, and NORMALITY'S Oddity and No Oddity and Conflict and No Conflict would occur less than 5 times in 100 by chance. The difference between Impact and No Impact would occur less than 1 time in 1,000.

Main effects of Oddity and Conflict, however, depended on whether they implicated Known Principals (Table 32). Oddity's priority over non-Oddity stories depended on their not involving Known Principals ($M=4.6$ vs. $M=3.2$), while Conflict's effect hinged on inclusion of Known Principals ($M=5.4$ vs. $M=3.3$). Otherwise, mean priority of these three news elements was affected only by the limitations of consecutive-item relay.

Table 32. Mean priority scores showing interaction of PROMINENCE and NORMALITY news dimension elements across Oklahoma UPI and AP editors.

| NORMALITY News Elements | PROMINENCE News Elements Known Principals | Unknown Principals |
|---|---|---|
| Oddity | 4.1 | 4.6 |
| No Oddity | 4.5 | 3.2 |
| Conflict | 5.4 | 3.3 |
| No Conflict | 3.9 | 3.9 |

Differences between the mean probable use scores of NORMALITY and PROMINENCE news dimension elements would tend to occur by chance less than 1 time in 100.

## Actual v. Theoretical News Judgments

The relationship between the wire service newsmen's filing priority and the theoretical editor's probable use of news items ($r = .75$, $p < .01$), was similar to that between the city editors and the theoretical.

Oddity-Impact and Conflict-Impact stories were given less-than-expected priority, while the Conflict-Known Principal-

Impact combination and Impact, alone, received higher priority.

The revised array of news elements (Table 19, Page 58) more closely matches the wire service newsmen's priority, except for single-element Impact stories which the "new" theoretical editor still prefers less than do the bureau men.

This further points up the dire need to operationalize different levels of Impact. The present, all-inclusive definition of Impact weakens the 3-D framework's stability. In other words, a Conflict-Impact story might be played lower than Impact, alone, if the latter has more SIGNIFICANCE. The present definition assumes equal SIGNIFICANCE of Impact in all stories.

## Comparative Summary

AP and UPI newsmen assigned nearly identical priority to the news elements and their combinations. Average difference in their arrays of elements was a mere .2 of one rank position. The frequent claim that UPI is more sensational (whatever that means) than AP was not supported by the news judgments of Oklahoma bureau men.

Relative influence of news dimension elements on wire service decisions practically duplicated the effect on the 10 city editors in Ward's study (Table 4, Page 38 ). Impact was the core ingredient for "flash" or "bannerline" status.

Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals, over-all, received about equal play. In both studies, all the newsmen perceived the news similarly.

In the Carter studies, probable use of Oddity differed somewhat by type of gatekeeper, though not drastically. In judging the localized stories, Oddity and Impact were played about equally and Conflict made little difference to the editors and reporters. Still, there was a marked similarity of news element values among the wire service newsmen and Carter's city editors and reporters.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] Kurt Lewin, *Psychological Ecology* (1943), "Field Theory in Social Sciences," (New York, 1951), pp. 170-186.

[2] David Manning White, "The 'Gate Keeper': A Case Study in the Selection of News," *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 27, (Fall, 1950), pp. 383-390.

[3] Lorenzo Edward Carter, "News Values of Editors-Reporters on Five Oklahoma Newspapers" (unpub. Master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1970), p. 121.

[4] George Roger Rhoades, "News Values and News Decisions of Selected *Associated Press* and *United Press International* Newsmen in Oklahoma" (unpub. Master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1971).

[5] See Appendix C for list of stories. Rhoades localized eight of Ward's original hypothetical stories for his 48-item input.

# A Memorandum On Journalism Education

A journalism teacher once suggested that news values were so imbedded in our society that any media-consuming high school student might well rank-order a given input of news about the same as a seasoned newsman.

Since then, the author has received cool responses to the suggestion from some journalism educators and newsmen. Afterall, if this be the case, why earn a journalism degree? What good have all the reporting and editing exercises done? Newspapers might as well train off-the-street walk-ins or non-journalism college graduates.

On the other hand, some educators and practitioners agree that a J-school diploma is not the "necessary and sufficient" ingredient for the best reporting or copy editing.

"What did you learn in college?" editors frequently ask the new journalism graduate. An appropriate answer would be, "The same things you learned."

A continuing problem of any journalism school centers more on what the new employer means than on what he says. Part of what he means is this: "Why didn't you learn to edit copy and write stories or headlines the way we do it HERE?" Further, the editors soon spot a new employee's relatively dull nose for news.

Many excellent journalism schools make brilliant and fairly successful attempts to "season" their undergraduates. Such efforts are commendable, considering the built-in handicaps of the classroom and laboratory.

However, no reporting or editing instructor, regardless of media experience, constitutes even a reasonable facsimile of the working editor on a *particular* newspaper in a *particular* community.

Hundreds of city editors, for example, daily are involved with breaking and followup news in their communities. All this interacts with their familiarity with persons and places in the community and on the job.

While a city editor is concerned with *his* town, the journalism instructor is involved with something akin to the hypothetical town of Middleport. The *same* news breaks on approximately the *same* day of *every* semester in the *same* laboratory. The dynamic context of the live community--so important to developing a "nose for news"--is missing. No matter how ingenious the instructor is, lack of authenticity is a handicap.

But a "nose for news" also involves a sense of priority of what generally constitutes news for an editor on any newspaper. Here, journalism schools can hold their own. Many do.

Still, some instructors show an inordinate concern with "capitals, commas and colons." These important tools of the journalism can be, should be, and often are, self-learned. Competent reporters and editors don't get paid for studying dictionaries and style books. They use them as incidental tools to get the more important job done. Student reporters and editors should do the same. Unfortunately, some experience an overkill of punishment and reward for their grammatical performance. They may not need to use the dictionary and style book on the job, but often they learn to be newsmen from editors and reporters who do.

Some administrators and instructors assume that journalism, like English, is a "tool subject." The fallacy of this assumption was expressed by general semanticist Wendell Johnson. His remarks on teaching English equally apply to much present-day journalism instruction.

> ...It is to be considered that when you learn a language such as English, you are also learning a kind of physics and psychology, a knowledge of the world and of yourself. It is the failure to realize this that would appear to account for the more or less common assumption that English is a "tool subject." To regard English as a "tool subject" is to assume that when you learn to write and read, you do not learn

> anything except how to learn to write and read, and that, having learned to do these things, you possess the "tools" with which to learn.
>
> People who suppose--and many educators do suppose--that you can teach reading and writing merely as "tool subjects" appear to overlook the fact that a tool implies something to be tooled by a tooler. They appear to assume that there actually are subjects without content, and to ignore the obvious consideration that a tool implies something about which it is to be used on, and the wisdom or lack of wisdom of the persons who designed it. That is to say, they appear to overlook the fact that you cannot learn a language without also learning the structure of the language--and without learning to impose that structure onto reality, a reality which includes yourself. When you learn English, as it is sometimes taught, you learn, among other things, that reality involves no etcetera's. To learn that is to prepare yourself for innumerable shocks and disappointments, and regrettable and foolish mistakes occasioned by absolute allness and dogmatism.[1]

To countless student reporters, the "world of journalism" comprises the unscrambling of "facts" in scores of writing exercises that call for blemish-free, perfectly-tipped pyramids. At semester's end, revised stories and style quizzes are bound and resubmitted for checkoff.

What is news? The "scrapbook" tells all. Sometimes it's the people involved. Sometimes, it's the "nature" of the event. One story has conflict...another, human interest ...the mayor makes that one...schools and local government are always newsworthy.

News to the grammar-trained student journalist can be a mixture of topics and ill-defined characteristics. "Capitals, commas and colons" obscure perception of any common underlying framework that could explain better the needs of future employers.

To paraphrase Dr. Johnson, any absolute and dogmatic emphasis on the tools of grammar and style overshadows what is to be tooled by the tooler. Students do not learn news without learning the structure of news and how to impose that structure upon the reality of the newsroom. The traditional separation of reporting and editing courses in college not only works contrary to newsroom reality, but often fails to deal with the underlying structure of news.

Journalism schools can never teach the precise tool handling required in a specific newsroom, but they can provide an awareness of a basic structure that characterizes the output of any newsroom.

A St. Louis editor, who participated in the first city-editor study, indirectly shed light on journalism schools' problems in his comments about the study and news judging in general:

> I've enjoyed the exercises and have made some

> discoveries. One is that it is harder to evaluate news in the abstract than in the actual, familiar situation. I suppose we all act somewhat by reflex and local conditioning in the day-to-day flow of events.

Students, for the most part, write or evaluate news in the abstract--out of context of the actual, familiar situation. To the editor, such assignments are more difficult than judging the day-to-day flow of news in St. Louis. But if a student were suddenly placed in that editor's chair, chances are, the task would be over-whelming.

One of journalism education's jobs is clear-cut and well-known. The gap between the editor's familiar situation and the student's abstract situation cannot be closed--but it must be narrowed. How?

Though gatekeeping in the abstract was difficult for the above editor, he evaluated--perhaps, subliminally--the underlying structural elements in the news. His judgments consistently were similar to those of other city editors studied. His actual, familiar situation does not explain this.

These exploratory studies have suggested that certain underlying news dimension elements are the common denominators which are salient to many different--if not all--editors' news values in our culture and time.

A news structure, as described herein, is a start. It is functional, but revisions and amplifications are needed. (See

Page 58). Despite this, uses for such a concept are numerous. Some are discussed on Pages 150-168.

Sufficient at this point is to say that journalism edcation substantially comprises an unproductive amount of "piecemeal tool-handling" chores which could be reduced and tied to a stronger, but simpler, framework of news elements that more adequately orients the student to what news is.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Wendell Johnson, People in Quandaries (New York: Harper & Row, Inc., 1946), pp. 212-213.

# Study No. 4: Beginning Reporting Students Judge the News Before and After Instruction

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: The most functional requirement of the 3-D news framework is the influence of its news elements on gatekeeper judgments. Stories with Impact, Oddity, Conflict, Known Principals or Magnitude had to reap more probable use than stories without. But Magnitude, for example, contributed nothing to a story's value in the first Ward study and was dropped by Carter and Rhoades.

Thus far, Impact wielded significant influence in all studies. Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals were strong in Ward's *own* and *ideal* news packages and in Rhoades' wire service study. Conflict made no difference to some editors on Ward's *bad* newspaper for special, previously-described reasons. In the Carter studies, handicapped with a limited number of cases, all elements tended to make a difference in news play to all except one group of editors in each study. Oddity made no difference in one case while Conflict was equally played with No-Conflict items in another.

Yet, all inter-task correlations have been highly significant. Even Ward's *own* and *bad* newspaper packages showed a relationship of $r = .64$ ($p < .01$). The point is that correlation coefficients can mislead one on the relative influence of individual news elements. In other words, a non-journalist, as earlier suggested, might rank-order 54 news items similar to a veteran editor, yet his values of some news elements would noticeably differ from the editor's.

If this were true, a journalism teacher could pinpoint areas that need more emphasis. But if students and editors valued stories *and* news elements similarly, the instructor might consider redefining his role in the classroom. Such considerations prompted this study.)

## Method

Ward's original 54 hypothetical stories comprised the input pool for the principal instructor and 19 beginning reporting students at Oklahoma State University. On the first and last day of class, the 20 respondents--as city editors of their *own* hometown newspapers--rank-ordered the stories along an 11-point continuum from "most" to "least probably use."

All 20 news packages were correlated and variance analyzed before and after instruction. Hypotheses and analyses were similar to those in Ward's study of 10 city editors who judged the same input for their *own* newspapers two years earlier. The original 18 news element combinations, including Magnitude, comprised the underlying news structure.

## Research Questions

The classroom experiment[1] prompted three questions that naturally arose from previous studies of editors:

1. From the standpoint of instilling an adequate sense of news element priority, what job lay ahead for the students' instructor? Put another way, how were the students' news values similar and different from those of the city editors in Ward's study?
2. Did the students' probable use of specific news elements change during their 15 weeks of instruction? If so, how? Was the change toward or away from the editors? The instructor?
3. What was the relationship between the instructor's evaluation of a student performance (course letter grade) and the student's news values? In other words, did the more-rewarded student and the instructor show similar news values? The point is relevant to what performance variables were being measured--indeed--what the instructor's objectives were. News values certainly are revealed in lab exercises. But is performance on consecutive exercises as revealing as exercises where representative stories are judged in relation to each other?

## Findings

The average student's pre- and post-instruction local pages were substantially similar--on the surface--to those produced by city editors in Ward's study. That is, the relative probable use of 54 news items exceeded chance expectations.

This over-all similar item play, however, obscured meaningful differences in news element priority. Though some differences in news element play were observed between some newsmen types in Ward's studies, an undisturbing consistence prevailed. But the students were not impressed with several news elements. The editors' probable use of Impact was nearly duplicated by the students. But below-surface subtleties in students' uses of other elements strongly challenged interpretation.

## Pre-Instruction News Judgments

Like the city editors, the students headlined Impact and played Conflict and Known Principals lower, but similarly (Table 33). Oddity (M=5.77), however, was buried by all students, along with Magnitude (M=5.88). There was a slight tendency to place bigger headlines over Conflict (M=6.58) than over Known Principal stories (M=6.12), but not over Oddity.

Students differed most from editors by similarly playing stories with and without all elements, except Impact. In addition, stories with and without Magnitude filled as much news hole as any element, but Impact. The editors either rejected Magnitude items or used them as run-of-paper squibs.

Table 33. Mean probable use of news elements across all beginning reporting students and by types, prior to instruction.

| News Elements | All Students | Type I | Type II |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | 7.15 | 7.23 | 7.02 |
| No Impact | 5.46 | 5.39 | 5.48 |
| Oddity | 5.77 | 5.75 | 5.73 |
| No Oddity | 6.15 | 6.14 | 6.12 |
| Conflict | 6.58 | 6.47 | 6.65 |
| No Conflict | 5.74 | 5.78 | 5.66 |
| Known Principals | 6.12 | 6.17 | 6.07 |
| Unknown Principals | 5.92 | 5.86 | 5.92 |
| Magnitude | 5.88 | 5.72 | 6.00 |
| No Magnitude | 6.09 | 6.16 | 5.99 |

Differences as large as those between the SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements, Impact and No Impact, would occur by chance less than 1 time in 1000.

Students agreed on the relative play of 31 of the 54 items. The five highest consensus items (Table 34) contained elements similar to those of editors. Impact, with combinations of Oddity, Conflict and-or Known Principals, characterized all five top consensus items by both groups.

Contrasting editors was students' agreement on a low, "filler status" of two Oddity and Known Principal items. The students agreed to bury only one of three no-news items: the Polka Club dance. Raw scores showed that students played the no-news, "Judge-Elected" item higher than seven other stories--one being the Oddity-Known Principal-Magnitude item about the general's wife. In no previous study did all newsmen fail to reject all three no-news items.

*Profiles of Student Types*: Students tended to form two clusters in news judgments, but, like the editors, differences were not significant.

Table 34. High and low consensus items of all beginning reporting students *prior to* instruction.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Mean Score |
|---|---|---|
| MOST PROBABLY USED BY ALL STUDENTS | | |
| O-KP-I | Loan Company Loses Files | 5.20 |
| KP-I | City Drops Atom-Smasher Race | 5.06 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | 4.96 |
| O-I | Bridge Caves In; Turkeys Float | 4.73 |
| C-I | Cut-Rate Stations Padlocked | 4.63 |
| LEAST PROBABLY USED BY ALL STUDENTS | | |
| N | Polka Club Dance | 2.30 |
| O | Husband Buys Phone Booth | 2.77 |
| O | Cows Charge Motorists | 2.90 |
| KP | Former Mayor Gets Arizona Post | 2.90 |
| KP | Judge Elected | 2.83 |

Type I revealed a "Soft news-Impact" pattern, playing Impact higher than Type II and giving generous space to Known Principals and Oddity (Table 35). The no-news high-school-counselor item appeared as higher-played for the first time in this news package.

This "Soft news-Impact" type included 12 students, seven of whom showed more of an all-around news priority *after* instruction.

Table 35. Items more highly accepted by Type I beginning reporting students, *prior to* instruction.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | 3.7 |
| C-I | Vandals Spray-Paint Autos | 1.7 |
| KP-M | City Manager's Salary Upped | 1.6 |
| O-KP-I | Loan Company Loses Files | 1.5 |
| I | Urban Renewal Grant | 1.3 |
| O-KP-M | Ad Error Big Bargain | 1.3 |
| KP-I | CORE Director Leaves | 1.1 |
| O-KP | Puppy Births | 1.1 |
| C | Husband Shoots Wife | 1.1 |
| N | Counselor Tours | 1.1 |
| O-KP-I | Power Fails; City Blackout | 1.0 |
| KP-I | City Drops Atom Smasher Race | 1.0 |

Type II's higher-played items (Table 36) indicate an "all-around news" pattern. Their preferred items comprised all the news elements equally often. To them all news was interesting. The instructor best represented this type, which also included seven students.

Generally, the higher-played items of pre-instruction student types nearly defied description. Their "equalitarian" play of news elements differed from the previous newsmen types. For example, "Soft news-Oddity" and "Hard news, Big Name-Conflict" editors in Ward's studies were respectively unanimous in higher play of Oddity and Conflict items (Tables 5 and 6, Page 25). Vague judgment patterns of student types indicated inconsistent news element values. Decision patterns pointed to selective perception of certain story details that subjugated the news-element "gestalt." Result was an inability to differentiate between single- and multi-element stories. Thus, there were more instances in which students played two- and three-element stories lower than one-element items.

Table 36. Items more highly accepted by Type II beginning reporting students prior to instruction.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C-KP-I | Diamond Rubber May Close Doors | 2.3 |
| O-M | Twins Die | 2.3 |
| O-I | Santa Claus Is Convict | 2.1 |
| O-M | Woman Freed from Stable | 2.0 |
| C-M | Seven Persons Injured | 1.8 |
| M | Utility Refund | 1.7 |
| I | Firm Buys 100-Acre Site | 1.6 |
| C-KP | Ex-Gubernatorial Candidate Killed | 1.6 |
| O-KP | Oldest Youth Leader Dies | 1.5 |
| C-KP-I | Negroes Barred from School | 1.3 |
| C-I | Teachers' Strike | 1.2 |
| O-KP | Motorcycle-Riding School Principal | 1.2 |
| M | 20 Cars Derailed | 1.0 |

## Post-Instruction News Judgments

The average student, after a semester's training, played the news similarly to his pre-training days (r=.85). Impact was headlined (M=7.42, Table 37). Oddity, Conflict, Known Principals and Magnitude got lower, but nearly equal play. Some preference for Conflict over Oddity, Known Principals and Magnitude was evident.

Table 37. Mean probable use of news elements across all beginning reporting students and by types *after* instruction.

| News Elements | All Students | Type I | Type II | Type III | Type IV |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | 7.42 | 7.52 | 7.37 | 7.43 | 7.45 |
| No Impact | 5.27 | 5.23 | 5.33 | 5.28 | 5.28 |
| Oddity | 5.68 | 5.66 | 6.05 | 5.15 | 5.95 |
| No Oddity | 6.13 | 6.15 | 5.98 | 6.42 | 6.03 |
| Conflict | 6.61 | 6.73 | 6.57 | 6.50 | 6.70 |
| No Conflict | 5.66 | 5.62 | 5.73 | 5.74 | 5.65 |
| Known Principals | 6.64 | 6.40 | 6.55 | 6.73 | 6.93 |
| Unknown Principals | 5.32 | 5.58 | 5.46 | 5.26 | 5.07 |
| Magnitude | 5.92 | 6.10 | 6.45 | 5.43 | 5.66 |
| No Magnitude | 6.02 | 5.93 | 5.78 | 6.28 | 6.16 |

Differences as large as those between the SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements of Impact and No Impact would occur by chance less than 1 time in 100. The same probability was shown for the PROMINENCE elements of Known and Unknown Principals. Differences between the NORMALITY dimension elements, Oddity and Conflict, by type of student, would occur by chance less than 5 times in 100. Same was true of SIGNIFICANCE elements: Impact and Magnitude.

After training, the average student played stories *with* Impact and Known Principals higher than those *without*. Conflict also tended to influence a story's probable use. *Before* training, only Impact affected a story's use. Stories *with* and *without* Oddity or Magnitude remained equally influential after training--an obvious departure from the city editors.

Despite similarity in over-all relative use of news items, before and after training, four types of students emerged from linkage analysis. The types disagreed on the use of

SIGNIFICANCE and NORMALITY news elements and on 47 of the 54 items, compared with disagreement on 23 items before training.

Post-trained students differed from the pre-trained and with Ward's city editors on consensus items. Only two of the post-trained students' consensus stories appeared in the pre-trained consensus list: the Polka Club Dance and Cows Charge Motorists (compare Table 38 items with those in Table 34, Page 92 ). The dance was played lower after training and the cows, an Oddity story, was played higher. These two post-training consensus items also were the only ones appearing among those on the city editors' consensus list (Table 3, Page 23).

Table 38. High and low consensus items of all beginning reporting students after instruction.

| Elements | Item Descriptions | Mean Score |
|---|---|---|
| C-KP-M | City's Tiff with Millionaire | 8.57 |
| C | Son Killed In Viet Nam | 8.10 |
| O-KP | Motorcycle-Riding School Principal | 7.50 |
| C-KP-M | Minister on Horseback | 7.23 |
| O | Patrolman Nabs Wife | 4.77 |
| O | Cows Charge Motorists | 4.77 |
| N | Polka Club Dance | 1.70 |

After training, the students disagreed on the relative play of all Impact stories. All their highest-played consensus items before training contained Impact. The same was true of editors on their own newspapers. In short, students agreed more to use "soft news" after training. And agreement was stronger after training than before, as indicated by the higher mean consensus scores.

At the course's end, news elements were not independently influential to students, as before. Difference between probable use of Impact and No Impact stories tended to be less when Known Principals were involved (M=7.9 v. M=6.0 in Table 39) than when they were not (M=7.0 v. M=4.5).

Table 39. Mean probable use scores showing interaction of PROMINENCE and SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements across all beginning reporting students after instruction.

| SIGNIFICANCE News Elements | PROMINENCE News Elements Known Principals | Unknown Principals |
|---|---|---|
| Impact | 7.9 | 7.0 |
| No Impact | 6.0 | 4.5 |
| Magnitude | 6.2 | 5.7 |
| No Magnitude | 6.9 | 5.2 |

Differences between the mean probable use scores of the SIGNIFICANCE and PROMINENCE news dimension elements would occur by chance less than 5 times in 100.

Also, in Table 39, Known Principals made substantially bigger news without Magnitude (M=6.9 v. M=5.2) than with Magnitude (M=6.2 v. M=5.7). In other words, Known Principals tended to get less play if no Impact were involved, but higher play without Magnitude. This kind of interaction was not found in any of the city editors' news packages.

Profile of Student Types: Though probable use of NOR-

MALITY and SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements depended on the type of student. These preferences were not evident in each type's higher-played items.

A careful study of Table 37, Page 111, however, reveals where the differential news preferences lie. Type III tended to value Oddity the least (M=5.15). Types I and II were more impressed with Magnitude than no-Magnitude stories, just the opposite of Types III and IV (M's=6.92 and 6.45 v. 5.43 and 5.66).

Type I students played nine stories higher than did other types, on the average (Table 40). But four of these items also were higher played by another type. Further, many of Type I's stories comprised news elements identical, or similar, to higher played items of other types.

The non-descript Type I seemed closest to an "All-around" editor. They included the instructor and 12 students.

Table 40. Items more highly accepted by Type I beginning reporting students after instruction.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C | Three Men Stabbed | 3.4 |
| M | Utility Refund | 1.9 |
| O-M | Twins Die | 1.9 |
| C | Husband Shoots Wife | 1.7 |
| I | Urban Renewal Grant | 1.5 |
| KP-M | Black Charlie Sentenced | 1.4 |
| M | 20 Cars Derailed | 1.4 |
| O-KP-M | Ad Error Big Bargain | 1.3 |
| C-M | Parking Meters Mowed Down | 1.1 |

The instructor portrayed an "All-around news" orientation before and after the course (r=.89), but several students shifted. Nine of the 12 students in the instructor's type formerly clustered with "Soft news-Oddity" editors.

Post-instruction Type II students also preferred a "news smorgasbord," as shown by their 12 higher-played items (Table 41). Only careful scrutiny of their average mean score differences revealed a "Soft news-Oddity" type who mildly preferred Oddity and Magnitude.

Table 41. Items more highly accepted by Type II beginning reporting students after instruction.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| O-M | Woman Freed from Stable | 4.3 |
| O-I | Bridge Caves In; Turkeys Float | 3.4 |
| C-KP-M | Coroner Robbed | 3.4 |
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | 2.9 |
| C-KP | Ex-Gubernatorial Candidate Killed | 2.3 |
| C-M | Holiday Death Toll | 1.7 |
| KP-M | Black Charlie Sentenced | 1.6 |
| KP | Former Mayor Gets Arizona Post | 1.5 |
| C-KP-M | City's Tiff with Millionaire | 1.4 |
| KP-M | City Manager's Salary Upped | 1.3 |
| C-M | Seven Persons Injured | 1.2 |
| C-M | Parking Meters Mowed Down | 1.1 |

The three post-instruction Type III students lacked any distinguishable pattern in higher-played items (Table 42). They were strict "topic worshipers" regardless of an item's news element composition. Even two no-news items were played higher.

Table 42. Items more highly accepted by Type III beginning reporting students after instruction.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| I | Pork Prices Rise | 3.6 |
| KP | Poet, Author Dies | 3.3 |
| N | Counselor Tours | 3.3 |
| O-KP | Oldest Youth Leader Dies | 2.5 |
| C-KP | Ex-Gubernatorial Candidate Killed | 2.1 |
| KP | Former Mayor Gets Arizona Post | 1.9 |
| N | Grand Jury Foreman Named | 1.6 |
| O-KP-M | Ad Error Big Bargain | 1.6 |
| I | Urban Renewal Grant | 1.3 |
| C-KP-I | Negroes Barred from School | 1.2 |
| I | Firm Buys 100-Acre Site | 1.1 |
| C-KP-I | Diamond Rubber May Close Doors | 1.0 |

The reciprocal pair of "topic worshipers" leaned toward the "Soft news-Oddity" type before instruction. The third Type III student defected from the instructor's pre-training "All-around news" type.

Type IV students clearly preferred "Big Names." Ten of their 12 higher-played items in Table 43 comprised Known Principals. Otherwise, they showed no consistent awareness of particular story elements.

Table 43. Items more highly accepted by Type IV beginning reporting students after instruction.

| News Elements | | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| C-KP | Ex-Gubernatorial Candidate Killed | 4.4 |
| C-KP | City Patrolman Fired | 3.8 |
| KP-M | Grand Jury Has Record Cases | 3.1 |
| KP-I | CORE Director Leaves | 2.8 |
| KP | Judge Elected | 1.9 |
| O-KP | Puppy Births | 1.6 |
| O-KP-M | General's Wife Hoards Sugar | 1.6 |
| C-KP-M | City's Tiff with Millionaire | 1.5 |
| O-KP-I | Computer Catnaps; Overcharges Residents | 1.5 |
| O-I | Santa Claus Is Convict | 1.4 |
| C-I | Teacher's Strike | 1.3 |
| C-KP-I | Negroes Barred from School | 1.0 |

## Actual v. Theoretical News Judgments

Students' probable use of 54 news items, before and after training, correlated r=.64 and r=.70 with the theoretical array, respectively. These over-all relationships, however, defy the consistency of previous profiles, as revealed by the students' use of several news elements.

After training, the students matched the theoretical editor fairly well on the probable use of impact, Known Principals and Magnitude. Oddity was played substantially lower, and Conflict higher, than expected. The same was true before training, except that, previously, Known Principals were played lower than expected.

This over-all profile of student news element play manifested from a perplexing treatment of individual items, as discussed on the following pages.

## Summary and Comment

Student news packages may have epitomized Stempel's contention that news is more complex than we have imagined. But their judgments prompted the author to conclude that news may be less complex than some people's imaginations. Before and after training, the students tended to show inconsistent news values in almost indescribably different ways.

An imaginary analogy to pre-training judgments might read like this: They threw the stories in the air. Impact landed on top. Stories with and without Oddity, Conflict, Known Principals and Magnitude landed on the bottom, almost simultaneously. On the other hand, had the city editors in Ward's study dropped their stories in order of probable use, items without Conflict, Oddity and Known Principals would have landed considerably below stories with those elements. Lower yet, would have been stories with and without Magnitude.

Student news packages were similar after training, except stories with Known Principals were more probably used than those without. And Conflict stories tended to outbid those without. Known Principals without Magnitude, however, wielded more influence than those with. Further, after-training news packages differed significantly by type of student. Type III was least impressed with Oddity, while Types I and II saw more news value in Magnitude than did Types III and IV.

While the instructor remainded an "All-around news" type, several students' news values altered during instruction. Nine left their pre-training "Soft news-Oddity" type to join the instructor. Three defected from the instructor. No relation existed between a student's grade and his news values, as measured by his probable use of news elements. Nor did closeness of news values to the instructor's seem to make a difference.

Both before and after instruction, student judgment patterns were nearly impossible to describe in terms of news elements more highly played by different types. Though the arbitrary one-mean-score criterion for higher-played items was questionable, it presented no problems in Carter's and Rhoades' studies of practitioners.

At least two judgment"patterns" rendered student news packages indescribable: (1) Some types displayed a "shotgun" usage of news elements, playing "a little bit of 'this and that' in various slots of every page." (2) Some types played one or two stories containing particular news elements much higher or lower than other types. Concurrently, they would play those "same sister" stories (same news elements) in moderately prominent news holes, alongside dissimilar items.

The contrast between higher-played items of students and editors clarifies both patterns. Each editor type was distinguished by his higher play of similar items. For example, all seven higher-played items of "Soft news-Oddity" editors (Table 5, Page 39) contained Oddity, while the "Big Name-Conflict" editors' higher-played items all contained Conflict (Table 6, Page 40).

Students, however, were "topic worshipers," apparently oblivious to news element composition. Most types played several single-element and-or "no-news" stories higher than they played two- and three-element stories. They strongly preferred to do so.

*Within* all student types, item preferences were inconsistent. Just one case in point: Type II, after training, showed great differential preference for the "same" items (Table 41, Page 115). They played the C-KP-M coroner robbery 3.4 mean scores higher than did other students. The "same" C-KP-M millionaire squabble was played a relatively low 1.4 mean scores higher. Note, too, that a weak C-M item was more strongly preferred than any: M=4.3 higher.

A counterpart of the *within-types* inconsistency occurred in the higher-played items *between* types. When one type of respondent's news priorities differed from another, his higher-played items also were expected to portray a fairly homogeneous list of preferred news elements. Not so with the students. Tables 40 thru 43, Pages 114-117, show that different student types preferred some stories with the same news elements. All of Type II's higher-played news element combinations, for example, were also preferred by other types.

This did not occur with editors. Their higher-played items vividly distinguished them on news elements, as well as topics (compare Tables 5, 6 and 7, Pages 39 & 40). Again, this highlights the students' orientation to topics, rather than to the structure of elements underlying the topics.

The similarity between the students' selective and relatively incomplete perception of news seems to run parallel with popular rhetoric about what news is and with the "piecemeal treatment" of news in disjointed, consecutive writing and editing exercises in too many classrooms.

This is not to say the Oklahoma State University students were any less trained. In fact, the instructor in this case is more conscientious and better trained than many, if not most, instructors. He is respected by students and professionals, alike. Furthermore, a beginning reporting course does not comprise the bulk of students' journalism training. Nor is the relative probable use of the 3-D news framework elements all that is relevant to a future employer's needs.

But the 3-D, or similar framework of news, can and should be used to help short-cut the "seasoning" process required of most journalism graduates on their first job. As suggested earlier, no journalism school can "season" students to specific requirements of particular editors or particular newspapers. But human events in every community have a common underlying framework that is verbally transferred in the form of a few underlying news dimension elements. Acute awareness of these elements through classroom training can help produce journalism graduates better adjusted to any newsroom in any community.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] This study was not a TRUE experiment in which the investigator had the power to assign subjects to experimental groups at random. By simply using a one group, pretest-posttest design, the investigator did not rule out extraneous pretest sensitization, history and maturation. The first was least likely since 15 weeks lapsed between testing. (See Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research ((New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965)), pp. 291-297.) Also, it should be recalled that items were considered subjects in the variance analysis.

# Study No. 5: Editors And Subscribers Judge Local News

A year after Ward's city editor study, I. Erwin Atwood of Southern Illinois University submitted the original 54 hypothetical Middleport stories to 40 subscribers and 13 newspaper staffers in an Iowa community studied by Ward.[1]

Both readers and staffers showed high agreement in news element preferences. Oddity was the only element that tended to distinguish news judgment patterns.

Atwood's findings concerning staffers were similar to those in Ward's study of city editors, even on the point that desk-bound newspaper staffers seemed to be poorer predictors of reader preferences than were reporter types.

Three years after the Atwood study, Carl Galow, dean of men at a midwest university and doctoral candidate at Oklahoma State University, compared the news judgments of two news editors and 50 subscribers in an Indiana community.[2]

Respondents Q-sorted Galow's 48-story localized input along a nine-point quasi-normal distribution.[3] Newsmen judges comprised the local daily's city editor and managing editor. The heterogeneous sample of subscribers ranged from a policeman to a steel mill foreman, from a bank president to an insurance salesman, from a high school senior to a widowed grandmother, and from a farmer to a university dean. Respondents were evenly split on sex.

The Galow study enabled comparison of over-all news judgment patterns between editors and readers as well as other comparisons relevant to the 3-D framework's reliability. For example:

1. How strongly were the Indiana city editors' relative use of news element combinations related to those city editors in the Ward and Carter studies and to those of the wire service gatekeepers in Rhoades' study.
2. How strongly was the average Indiana reader's relative use of news element combinations related to that of the newsmen in the above studies?
3. How strongly was the relationship between the Indiana respondents' news judgments and those of the original and revised theoretical editor's judgments?

## Findings

Three patterns of news values emerged from the elementary linkage analysis of subscriber judgments.[4] Editors arbitrarily were treated as a fourth type.

Although relative probable use of the 48 stories by Galow's average editor and subscriber was substantially similar (r=.80), the relative importance of the Oddity and Impact elements depended on the type of respondent and whether Known Principals were involved.

## Over-All News Element Influence

Paralleling most previous studies, stories with Impact and Conflict reaped bigger headlines than those without (Table 44, all-respondents' column). Whether the story involved Known Principals or Oddity, however, made little difference. Mean probable use of Oddity stories (5.0) was nearly identical to stories without Oddity (5.05), while stories with Known Principals (M=5.31) received a noticeable, but not significantly, higher play than Unknown Principals (M=4.67).

All gatekeepers in this series, thus far, had valued stories with Oddity more than those without, except the reporting students and Carter's editor-reporter teams as they rank-ordered hypothetical input.

The Indiana respondents' indifference to Known Principals found precedents with the students before and after training and with Carter's reporters and and editors. It should be recalled that all elements did tend to influence the Carter newsmen. The small sample of news elements may have affected results.

Also at variance with past studies was the Indiana re-

Table 44. Mean probable use of localized story elements across all respondents and by types.

| News Elements | All Respondents | Editors | Type I Readers | Type II Readers | Type III Readers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | 5.70 | 5.93 | 5.68 | 5.67 | 5.52 |
| No Impact | 4.36 | 4.06 | 4.45 | 4.46 | 4.47 |
| Oddity | 5.00 | 5.12 | 4.15 | 4.93 | 5.81 |
| No Oddity | 5.05 | 4.94 | 5.64 | 5.03 | 4.59 |
| Conflict | 5.78 | 5.84 | 5.86 | 5.66 | 5.76 |
| No Conflict | 4.60 | 4.56 | 4.66 | 4.61 | 4.58 |
| Known Principals | 5.31 | 5.53 | 5.38 | 5.16 | 5.17 |
| Unknown Principals | 4.67 | 4.45 | 4.61 | 4.83 | 4.81 |

Differences as large as those between the mean probable use of Conflict and No Conflict and between Impact and No Impact would occur by chance less than 1 time in 1000. Difference between Oddity and No Oddity by type of respondent would tend to occur less than 5 times in 100. Differences between the PROMINENCE and SIGNIFICANCE elements by types of respondents would tend to occur less than 5 times in 100 by chance.

spondents' near equal play of all news elements. Table 44 shows Impact netting a mean probable use of 5.70 and Conflict, 5.78, with Known Principals and Oddity slugged with insignificantly smaller headlines of 5.31 and 5.00, respectively.

## Some Kinds of Effects

Main effects of news elements were not as clear cut as over-all variances suggest. For example, Conflict seemed to have been the only independently influential news element in Table 44. Stories with Conflict were played higher than those without by all respondents. Yet, its relatively high play tended to be due to its combination with Known Principals

(M=6.39, Table 45). Oddity stories, on the other hand, netted smaller headlines when Known Principals were involved (M=4.78), than did stories without an unusual twist (M=5.56).

Bearing out this interaction, the three highest played items by the average Indiana respondent were Conflict-Known Principal stories involving a local plant closing (M=7.30), a mental hospital controversy (M=7.41), and a student dress code flare-up (M=7.30).

Three of the lowest-played items involved Oddity and Known Principals about a former mayor's house being invaded by lizards (M=3.44) and the incumbent mayor's hole-in-one golf shot (M=2.90).

Table 45. Mean probable use scores showing interaction of PROMINENCE and NORMALITY news dimension elements across Indiana editors and readers.

| NORMALITY News Elements | PROMINENCE News Elements Known Principals | Unknown Principals |
|---|---|---|
| Oddity | 4.78 | 5.22 |
| No Oddity | 5.56 | 4.41 |
| Conflict | 6.39 | 5.17 |
| No Conflict | 4.76 | 4.44 |

Differences as large as those between the mean probable use of the PROMINENCE and NORMALITY news dimension elements would tend to occur by chance less than 5 times in 100.

## Indiana Gatekeeper Types

Mostly, differences in probable use of the 12 news element combinations among types of Indiana respondents were not significant, as shown by the correlation coefficients in Table 46.

Only relationships between Types I and III (rho=.21) and between Types II and III (rho=.40) fell within chance expectations. Relative probable use of news element combinations between editors and each type of reader, as well as between reader Types I and II exceeded chance expectations. The analysis of variance more adequately pin-pointed the dependency of some news elements on the type of respondent.

Table 46. Rank-order correlations among Indiana editors and subscriber types on probable use of 12 news element combinations.

| Typal Pairs | Rank-order Correlation |
|---|---|
| Subscriber Types I and II | .85 |
| Subscriber Types II and Editors | .80 |
| Subscriber Type I and Editors | .70 |
| Subscriber Type III and Editors | .67 |
| Subscriber Type II and III | .40 |
| Subscriber Types I and III | .21 |

Type I subscribers' more-and-less-accepted items made typal description difficult. They played four Impact stories higher than did other types, but they also played four lower (Table 47). In every case, the lower played Impact stories contained Oddity. Type I suggests the "Hard-news-Impact" editor, reminiscent of Ward's Type III editor (own situation) who was older and had extensive reporting experience. (See Page 45.)

Type I's no-nonsense orientation to news is shown again in variance analysis with his lower play of Oddity (M=4.15) than No Oddity (M=5.64) relative to other readers and the editors, (Table 48). Type I could well represent those readers who cry for Press reform.

Table 47. Items more and less probably used by Type I readers than by editors and reader Types II and III on the average.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| MORE PROBABLY USED BY TYPE I | | |
| I | School Aid | 2.59 |
| I | Urban Planning Grant | 2.21 |
| KP | Mayor's Salary Hike | 1.88 |
| KP-I | $2.5 Million for Roads | 1.54 |
| I | Tuition Hike | 1.49 |
| LESS PROBABLY USED BY TYPE I | | |
| O-I | Santa Is Convict | 3.35 |
| O-I | Squirrel Kills Phone Lines | 2.10 |
| O | Pauper's Fortune | 2.05 |
| O-KP-I | Bees Invade Council | 1.97 |
| O-I | Elephants Block Traffic | 1.51 |

Table 48. Mean probable use scores showing interaction of NORMALITY news dimension elements with types of Indiana gatekeepers.

| NORMALITY News Elements | GATEKEEPER TYPES I | II | III | Editors |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oddity | 4.15 | 4.93 | 5.81 | 5.12 |
| No Oddity | 5.64 | 5.03 | 4.59 | 4.94 |
| Conflict | 5.86 | 5.66 | 5.76 | 5.84 |
| No Conflict | 4.66 | 4.61 | 4.58 | 4.56 |

Differences as large as those between the mean probable use of the NORMALITY news dimension's Oddity element for different types of respondents would tend to occur by chance less than 5 times in 100.

Notice that Type II subscribers and the editors in Table 48 played Oddity stories about equally. Thus, contributing to their high similarity in news values (rho=.80), as was shown in Table 46.

Type II subscribers were distinguished more by their lower played items containing the triple elements of Conflict, Known Principals and Impact (Table 49). Noteworthy is the fact that Type II comprised 32 of 49 participating readers.

Table 49. Items more and less probably used by Type II readers than by editors and reader Types I and III.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| MORE PROBABLY USED BY TYPE II | | |
| C | Woman Strangled | 1.72 |
| N | Counselor Tours | 1.03 |
| O | Woman Freed | .92 |
| C-I | Cattle Raisers Warned | .91 |
| O-I | Frightened Elephants | .88 |
| LESS PROBABLY USED BY TYPE II | | |
| C-KP | Grid Star Killed | 1.51 |
| C-KP-I | Hospital Funds Under Fire | 1.51 |
| C-KP-I | Dress Code Bars Students | 1.28 |
| P-I | County Drops Atom Smasher | .95 |
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | .88 |

Though Type II was difficult to describe from his differential item play, the relative probable use of news elements suggests an "All-around news" type, similar to one of the student types both before and after instruction. For example, Table 44 clearly showed that Type II's mean probable use of Oddity and Impact stories (4.93 and 5.67, respectively) hovered close to the mean of all respondents. Too, he does not differ significantly from other types on Conflict and Known Principals. So he could be considered average on most elements. As we'll see later, though, he,along with the editors, was more influenced by Impact than were Types I and III when no Known Principals were involved.

The Type III subscriber assembled a news package unlike any group thus far. He is appropriately characterized as a "Big Name-Oddity" type who contributed most to the unprecedented similar play of all elements in the 3-D framework.

Type III liked Conflict as well as the next reader and editor, but he bought Impact most readily when Oddity or Known Principals were tossed in. For example, in Table 50, all five of Type III's less accepted stories comprised consequential Impact stories whose major "flaw" was their lack of Oddity. This is a far cry from the Type I "Hard news-Impact" reader's no-nonsense approach to Impact news. Thus, Type III's local pages stood in bold contrast to Type I's (rho=.21, Table 46).

The difference between Type III's mean use of stories with and without Oddity (5.81-4.59=1.22, Table 48) is many times greater than that of any other type of respondent. Again, in Table 48, Type I's significantly lower play of Oddity stories (M=4.15) highlights differences between his local pages and those of Type III--or the editors, for that matter.

Type III's more and less accepted items in Table 50 portray a reader who apparently doesn't care about local matters that potentially affect the taxpayer's pocketbook or other aspects of his standard of living. As one observer said, "This guy seems to be a sports-loving hedonist who's willing to sit back, eat his grapes and let George worry about running the government and schools."

Table 50. Items more and less probably used by Type III readers than by editors and reader Types I and II.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| MORE PROBABLY USED BY TYPE III | | |
| O-I | Santa Is Convict | 3.55 |
| O | Derelict's Gift | 3.47 |
| C-KP | Grid Star Killed | 2.82 |
| O-KP-I | Bees Invade Council | 2.47 |
| C-KP-I | Dress Code Bars Students | 2.27 |
| LESS PROBABLY USED BY TYPE III | | |
| I | School Aid | 3.83 |
| KP-I | $2.5 Million for Roads | 3.12 |
| I | Urban Planning Grant | 2.59 |
| KP-I | City Pay Raise | 2.29 |
| C-I | Teachers' Pickets Banned | 1.99 |

Further evidence of Type III's "Big Name-Oddity" news values is seen in second-order interactions of Table 51. In the top two rows, Type III was the only group who gave similar-sized headlines to Known Principals with or without Impact (mean probable use of 5.69 and 5.66, respectively).

When no Known Principals were involved, Type III still preferred Impact stories over those without (M=5.35 v. 4.27), but not as much as did Type II and the editors.

The two bottom rows of Table 51 say that Types I and III were similarly influenced by Impact when no Known Principals or any Oddity was involved. But Impact's influence on Types I and III was a great deal less than on the editors.

This differential play of Impact, plus Type III's previously mentioned higher play of the Oddity-Impact and Known Principal-Impact combinations contributed greatly to "evening-up" the play of all news elements.

As a sidenote, the C-KP-I story on student dress code in Table 50 could have been perceived by Type III readers as

Table 51. Mean probable use scores showing interaction between PROMINENCE and SIGNIFICANCE news dimension elements by type of Indiana gatekeeper.

| News Element Combinations | GATEKEEPER TYPE I | II | III | Editors |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Known Principals-Impact | 6.02 | 5.86 | 5.69 | 6.49 |
| Known Principals-No Impact | 4.74 | 4.46 | 5.66 | 4.58 |
| Unknown Principals-Impact | 5.34 | 5.47 | 5.35 | 5.37 |
| Unknown Principals-No Impact | 3.88 | 4.18 | 4.27 | 3.54 |

Differences as large as those between the mean probable use of PROMINENCE and SIGNIFICANCE dimension elements by types of respondents would tend to occur less than 5 times in 100 by chance.

comprising the additional element of Oddity. If so, the argument for combining the Oddity and Conflict elements, as suggested on Page 60, is substantiated.

All-around-Impact best characterized the two editors' news values. They played Conflict about the same as subscribers, but preferred Known Principal stories over those without a little more than readers. A touch of Oddity caught their eyes; to wit, the O-I fire station story more preferred in Table 52.

The two Conflict-Impact stories more accepted in Table 52 imply a wider potential Impact than the two less accepted C-I stories. The lesser valued C-I stories involving cattle thefts and vandalism touched a limited segment of readers, while the more accepted teachers' strike and local Coca-Cola closing could affect a broad segment. Note, too, that three of the editors' more accepted Impact stories potentially affected a large slice of the community's pocketbook. This "pocketbook Impact" factor also stood out in the Atwood study.

The second-order interactions in Table 51 further emphasized the editors' "All-around-Impact" pattern. When combined with Known Principals, Impact stories tended to be played higher (M=6.49) by the editors than by reader Types I and III. However, Impact apparently was the dominant factor in the news element marriage. In the two bottom rows of

Table 51, the editors, again, more preferred Impact stories than those without, compared with Types I and III.

Table 52. Items more and less probably used by editors than by all three types of readers on the average.

| News Elements | Item Descriptions | Average Mean Score Difference |
|---|---|---|
| MORE PROBABLY USED BY EDITORS | | |
| KP-I | County Drops Atom-Smasher Race | 2.68 |
| C-I | Teachers' Pickets Banned | 2.23 |
| C-KP | Draft Board Sued | 1.93 |
| O-I | Fire Station Burns | 1.70 |
| C-KP-I | Coca Cola May Close | 1.61 |
| LESS PROBABLY USED BY EDITORS | | |
| C-I | Cattle Thefts Increase | 1.97 |
| C | 7 Persons Injured | 1.95 |
| I | Tuition Hike | 1.93 |
| C-I | Vandals Spray-Paint Autos | 1.74 |
| KP | Chancellor Lauded | 1.59 |

## Summary

If it were the Indiana editors' objective to assemble a "goodness-of-fit" community interest package, they probably kept a more commonly-denominated gate than many readers in their population. They agreed substantially with each reader type on the relative importance of news elements, as shown in Table 46. In fact, even the item-by-item play between the editors and the readers, over-all, correlated ($r=.80$, $p < .01$). In contrast, no type of reader assembled a news package satisfactory to all reader respondents.

In some ways, news values of Indiana respondents deviated from those seen in past studies--most notably the nearly equal probable use of Impact, Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals. Previously, newsmen--and even students--clearly preferred Impact and relegated Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals to lower, but comparable, news holes. Only Carter's editor-reporter teams valued another news element (Oddity) on par with Impact.

Furthermore, the average Indiana respondent was not influenced by the Oddity and Known Principal elements. Most gatekeepers in this Oklahoma State series played stories *with* Oddity and Known Principals higher than those *without*. All were significantly influenced by Impact.

Much of the Indiana news profile was attributed to the Type III "Big Name-Oddity" reader whose fascination for Oddity seemed ecstatic. On the other hand, his apathy for Impact was best described as "ho-hum." Impact was most important to him when embellished with Oddity or Known Principals.

The only news element that equally influenced editors and readers in the Indiana community was Conflict. All slugged it with similar-sized headlines that were considerably larger than those assigned to stories without Conflict. The relatively large news hole filled by Conflict, however, was mostly due to Known Principals being involved in the controversy.

## Editors' News Values: A Comparison

Thus far, the probable use of news element combinations by working newsmen from ten different states has produced significantly similar news packages. And since the various judgment tasks spanned several years, the 3-D Framework's stability reliability seems substantial. The Indiana editors' news packages--assembled four to five years after the first packages in Ward's study--further supported the news structure's stability, as shown in Table 53.

Table 53. Rank-order correlations among Indiana editors with the theoretical editor and with those gatekeepers in the Ward, Carter and Rhoades' studies, on probable use of news element combinations.

| Typal Pairs | Rank-Order Correlation |
|---|---|
| Indiana Editors & Ward's City Editors | .87 |
| Indiana Editors & Rhoades' Wire Editors | .75 |
| Indiana Editors & Carter's Editors-Reporters | .67 |
| Indiana Editors and Theoretical Editor Revised | .83 |

In terms of underlying news elements, the reader would find difficulty distinguishing the Indiana editors' local pages from those assembled by other newsmen in this series--especially Ward's 10 city editors in their *own* newspaper situation (rho=.87) and the revised theoretical editor (rho=.83).

The similarity between all local pages in Table 53 would occur by chance less than 1 time in 100.

Another finding in the Galow study, but not analyzed in this section, was the high relationship between the Indiana editors' generalized and localized news packages. Galow asked the editors to Q-sort Ward's original hypothetical Middleport items in addition to the localized stories. Item correlation was r=.86. It should be recalled that editors and reporters in the Carter study also performed this dual judgment task and correlated r=.85 on relative probable use of items. This lent further support to the importance of underlying news elements, as opposed to specific topics.

The Indiana "All-around-Impact" editors displayed news values most similarly to Ward's editors working in their own situation (r=.87); to Carter's editor-reporter teams (r=.76) and to Rhoades' wire service newsmen (r=.75). All these similarities exceeded chance more than 99 times in 100.

Galow's **attribute** variables (age, sex, education, income, occupation and marital status) helped little in explaining different news judgment patterns. Types I and II--the "Hard news-Impact" and "All-around News" subscribers, respectively--comprised similar degrees of heterogeneity on most of the variables. Each type was nearly evenly split on sex and showed wide diversity in occupations, ranging from homemakers to even higher-paid administrative jobs. More than one-third of each type held college degrees and more than half exceeded $10,000 in annual income.

Type III--the "Big Name-Oddity" readers--were more homogeneous on age, occupation, income and education. This small group included two secretaries and a farmer-salesman, all of whom earned between $10,000 and $15,000 annually. All were over 35 years old. None held a college degree. Persons with similar profiles also appeared in Types I and II.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] L. Erwin Atwood, "How Newsmen and Readers Perceive Each Others' Story Preferences," *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 47 (Summer, 1970), pp. 296-303.

[2] Carl Frederick Galow , "A Comparison of One Newspaper's Editor and Subscriber News Values," (unpub. Ed.D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1973).

[3] The localized input comprised 12 news element combinations used in the Carter and Rhoades studies. Like Rhoades, Galow submitted four stories comporting to each combination. Analysis tools and procedures were the same as in all previous studies.

[4] Actually, four types of readers emerged, the fourth type comprising one person whose news judgment pattern was nearly diametrically opposite other types. This respondent was discarded in the present capsuled version on the chance the reader may have perceived the Q-distribution polar points in reverse.

# A New Editor Is Born

More than 6300 decisions by 36 working newsmen, 19 students, a journalism professor and 49 readers were rendered in these five gatekeeper studies. On 10 different occasions, respondents from as many states Q-sorted a pool of stories built on a multi-dimensional framework of news.

The researchers sought to explain the seemingly complex surface of news through an underlying framework of three semantically independent, meaningful dimensions: SIGNIFICANCE (Impact, No Impact); NORMALITY (Oddity, Conflict, Normal); and PROMINENCE (Known and Unknown principals).

If a profile of news values could be predicted for different gatekeepers on difference newspapers, a grassroot level of parsimony would exist to help decloud much spurious rhetoric borne out of selective exposure and perception of Press performance. To date, decades of news analyses appear to have traveled in a "Winnie-the-Pooh" circle--each analysis stopping in the other's tracks--each ending up where the other left off--without knowing it.

Journalism textbooks contain scores of labels to represent news values. Most are not exclusive or exhaustive. The four news elements in the present series were gleaned from more than 200 news value words offered in 35 textbooks. They do not refer to categories or topics, but to underlying news dimensions. Each dimension's element comports to countless topics daily reported in any newspaper in our culture and time.

Unlike much textbook and classroom rhetoric (there are exceptions), the proposed 3-D framework emphasizes the cumulative and interactive effects of news elements. And rightly so. One would be hard put to find a news story containing, say, only Known Principals, Conflict, Oddity, or Impact. Sensing the relationships among news elements, in large part, seems akin to having a "nose for news."

## 3-D Framework's Predictability

From our news dimension elements, three theoretical editors were conceived as the studies progressed. Each was assigned a probable use hierarchy of news elements and combinations.

The first theoretical editor adequately predicted actual gatekeeping decisions, as shown in Table 54. His relative probable use of the 12 news element combinations correlated least with Ward's city editors as they assembled news packages for the *bad* newspaper (rho=.65). However, all news packages were significantly similar to the first theoretical editor's.

Following Ward's studies of 10 city editors in their *own* and the hypothetical *bad* and *ideal* situations, the theoretical editor's probable use hierarchy was revised, mostly because the play of stories with Known Principal-Conflict elements was underestimated. In Table 54, the second theoretical editor assembled a news package more like editors in each environment than did the first editor.

Table 54. Rank-order correlations (rho) of each of three theoretical editor's probable use of 12 news elements with those of the 10 gatekeeper groups.

| Gatekeeper Groups | First Theor. Editor | Second Theor. Editor | Third Theor. Editor |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ward's City Editors: | | | |
| Own Newspaper | .87 | .90 | .96 |
| Bad Newspaper | .65 | .67 | .81 |
| Ideal Newspaper | .83 | .89 | .81 |
| Carter's Reporters-Editors: | | | |
| Generalized Stories | .76 | .82 | .88 |
| Localized Stories | .67 | .78 | .85 |
| Rhoades' Wire Editors | .75 | .83 | .89 |
| Indiana Editors | .75 | .83 | .91 |
| Indiana Subscribers | .70 | .83 | .90 |
| Reporting Students: | | | |
| Before Instruction | .64 | .94 | .85 |
| After Instruction | .70 | .89 | .82 |

All but one rank-order correlation would exceed chance expectations at least 99 times in 100. That between the *bad* newspaper and the first *theoretical* editor would fall within chance limits less than 2½ times in 100.

*Still, there seemed to be pin-pointable flaws in the theoretical editor's array.*

As mentioned, our theoretical framework lacked any systematically established precedent. We were exploring--revising as the decisions were analyzed. The first step was to drop Magnitude, a do-nothing, non-exclusive element.

Early in the series, we knew that more discretely-defined news element levels were needed for internal item consistency (see Page 54 ). Impact held its own fairly well, but Oddity was a touchy element that bounced up and down, in and around, the gatekeepers' pages--especially when combined with Known Principals. And Known Principals, themselves, have a highly heterogeneous influence. Conflict's obvious split should have been between physical and verbal encounters. Furthermore, the argument for a fourth news dimension to extract any interaction of Conflict and Oddity merits serious consideration.

## A New Theoretical Editor

Though the above suggestions exceed the bounds of this series, a third theoretical editor's relative probable use of news elements could improve the over-all predictability of existing news elements.

The author averaged the mean probable use of all groups for each news element and combination of elements. Stories with Conflict and Known Principals still were played higher than hypothesized by the second-theoretical editor. Reordering their priorities produced a third theoretical news package that corresponded to actual news men's values better than did the first two in Table 54.

The third theoretical editor's lowest correlation with actual news element use was with students after the beginning reporting course (rho=.82, p < .001). Table 54 shows that more than 80 per cent of the variance between the theoretical and several actual news packages was explained by the 3-D framework hierarchy: Ward's city editors on their own and the ideal newspapers, rho=.96; Indiana editors, rho=.91; and Indiana subscribers, rho=.90.

## Rationale for New Theoretical Array

The latest theoretical array was easy to derive by averaging the mean probable use of news elements across all responding groups. But behind the average was a story whose plot could easily confuse the most attentive investigator, let alone the lay reader. The plot's gradual and subtle unfolding again struck at Stempel's "complexity-beyond-imagination" characterization of news and further stressed the need to conceptualize an underlying news structure or framework.

The 3-D framework's facet structure sought to determine if interaction of news elements affected their probable use and if some news elements, singly or combined, were played higher or lower by some types of gatekeepers than by others.

In only three of the 10 news judging tasks did the influence of one news element depend on its combination with another. Rhoades' wire service newsmen and Galow's Indiana respondents allotted more space to Conflict and less to Oddity when those elements were combined with Known Principals--a trend faintly evident in several news packages. Impact, normally a strong, independent element, drew smaller headlines in Ward's *bad* newspaper package which generally catered to puffery of local officials.

Oddity and Conflict, more than any other element, distinguished the gatekeeper types. In Ward's *ideal* newspaper, the "Hard news-Conflict editor preferred Conflict more and Oddity less than did other types. One group of Carter's city editors and reporters played Oddity higher and on par with Impact, while another type placed Conflict above the fold. The "topic-worshiping" type of reporting class graduates relegated Oddity to a filler status. Galow's Indiana "Soft news" reader was the only type primarily influenced by Oddity. He also was less impressed with Impact than were the Indiana editors.

Impact and Known Principals wielded relatively little differential influence on gatekeepers. In all but two news packages, Impact filled larger news holes than other elements--for every type of gatekeeper. One type of editor in Ward's *ideal* newspaper wasn't satisfied with merely leading off with Impact stories. He enhanced them with bannerlines, so to speak.

So the interactive effects mostly involved a higher play of Conflict and lower play of Oddity. But over-all, the main effects of news elements saw Impact as the most probably used element in eight news judging tasks, on par with Oddity in the Carter localized news package and equally played with other elements in the Indiana study. Oddity, Conflict and Known Principals were equally played in 9 of the 10 tasks.

The main and interactive effects of news elements are evident in the third theoretical news element array in Table 55.

For example, stories with Oddity and Known Principals ( A ) are played lower in the third array than in the first two, while those containing Conflict and Known Principals (A A) are played higher. Oddity alone ( B ) is played higher. All this has the effect of raising the theoretical probable use of Conflict and lowering of Oddity, while probable use of Impact and Known Principals does not change across all three theoretical arrays.

Another way to stress the third theoretical editor's improved predictability is to compute the mean probable use of the 12 news element combinations from a proposed Q-deck of 60 stories--5 to represent each combination. The stories would be rank-ordered along an 11-point scale, as shown in Table 56.

Table 55. Rank positions of 12 news element combinations for each of three theoretical arrays.

| News Elements | First Theor. Editor | Second Theor. Editor | Third Theor. Editor |
|---|---|---|---|
| Conflict-Known Principals-Impact | 3.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 A A |
| Oddity-Known Principals-Impact | 1.0 | 2.0 | 2.5 A |
| Oddity-Impact | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.5 |
| Conflict-Known Principals | 8.0 | 7.0 | 4.0 A A |
| Conflict-Impact | 4.5 | 4.0 | 6.0 |
| Impact | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 |
| Known Principals-Impact | 4.5 | 5.0 | 6.0 |
| Oddity | 9.5 | 9.5 | 8.0 B |
| Conflict | 9.5 | 9.5 | 9.5 |
| Oddity-Known Principals | 7.0 | 8.0 | 9.5 A |
| Known Principals | 11.0 | 11.0 | 11.0 |
| No News | 12.0 | 12.0 | 12.0 |

Table 56. Theoretical Q-distribution of 60 news items over an 11-point continuum.

Most Probably Used — Least Probably Used

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of Items | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

The theoretical Q-distribution would produce a mean probable use for each news combination as shown in Table 57.

How well does the new theoretical array correspond to the observed main and interactive effects in our field experiments? Fairly well, it seems. Impact has a mean probable

Table 57. Mean probable use scores for each of 12 news element combinations resulting from an 11-point distribution of 60 news stories--5 to represent each element combination.

| News Elements | Mean Probable Use Scores |
|---|---|
| Conflict-Known Principals-Impact | 10.60 |
| Oddity-Known Principals-Impact | 8.90 |
| Oddity-Impact | 8.90 |
| Conflict-Known Principals | 7.60 |
| Conflict-Impact | 6.30 |
| Impact | 6.30 |
| Known Principals-Impact | 6.30 |
| Oddity | 5.00 |
| Conflict | 4.00 |
| Oddity-Known Principals | 4.00 |
| Known Principals | 2.60 |
| No News | 1.40 |

use of 7.88, greater than that for Oddity with 7.14; Conflict, 7.13; and Known Principals, 6.67. Differences among the latter three are not significant, as was found in most of our field studies.

In addition, the third theoretical array suggests strong interaction between the PROMINENCE and NORMALITY elements, just as the actual data did. Oddity is less influential when Known Principals are involved, while Conflict commands higher priority with Known Principals.

From past studies, we assume Conflict and Oddity would tend most to separate gatekeepers into "Soft news-Oddity" and "Hard news-Conflict" types.

But over-all, Conflict, Oddity and Known Principals would serve primarily as window dressings for Impact.

## Etcetera

This exploratory work serves to point up several seemingly valid propositions about the news judging behavior of gatekeepers. The propositions are not presented as the "last word" in gatekeepers' decision making. Rather, they are offered for what is considered to be a stronger and more organized foundation upon which to probe further into the question: "What do editors consider newsworthy?"

The propositions offered from this work are:

1. A fairly high prediction of gatekeepers' news judging patterns can be obtained, if input is characterized in terms of the three proposed news dimensions. Substantial evidence from this exploratory work merits suggested revisions of news element levels, in an attempt to obtain a higher degree of predictability.
2. Although news judging patterns of certain gatekeepers appear to change with varying social and physical environments, this change is subtle and does not stand out in bold contrast when one compares the over-all output of several different gatekeepers.
3. Despite the variations in actual newspaper systems, editors working on those actual papers may show more homogeneous news judgment than if they all were judging a similar input of news in an identically described situation

which was unfamiliar to them, as shown in the Ward studies.

4. It is doubtful that age, amount or kind of schooling, length of service on the job, religion or specific type of work background, circulation, or type of community play a predominant role in the gatekeeper's decision-making.

5. Whereas gatekeepers will differ in their play of individual news stories, dealing with specific subjects, over-all they will tend to maintain a hierarchy of values as hypothesized in these studies.

Relevant research questions sprouting from this work are legion. Refinement of, and further work on, the present design, without much doubt, will lead to the closing of many gaps in the misunderstanding of "what do news editors consider newsworthy?" Further, it is felt there is no need for more decades to elapse before more understanding can evolve. Progress can run side by side with research in the making, as it did in this work.

The present work showed that news, indeed, is a complex entity. But more meaningful is the notion that underlying the news are complex perceptual processes in which patterns can be found.

Aid to Education. Refinement of news elements and controls on environmental situations will bring the study of news decision-making to a point of discovering net patterns. This type of work will be of great aid to news reporting and editing teachers. Even at this point, several suggestions can be offered for their consideration.

Anyone who peruses several reporting and editing textbooks soon realizes that, generally, news is discussed in terms of either subject matter topics or single news elements, or both. Granted, the instructor or student is free to do his own "guesswork" dimensional structuring and put the elements together and arrive at an "armchair" theory that certain combinations would be valued more than others. But how much effort is put forth in this respect?

Difficulty in defining news dimensions and elements in these studies clearly points out that none of them is "cut and dried," so to speak. When an instructor stresses the importance of Conflict in the news, what does he mean? Conflict, itself, may have little value for most editors. Conflict plus Known Principals, however, has high value. Impact in the news? It is highly valued, generally. But is this always true? What are some of the textbook writers referring to as Magnitude in the news? Magnitude seemingly has no value unless its degree constitutes Oddity and-or Impact as defined herein. Perhaps these news elements are actually uni-dimensional. Known Principals in the news? Obviously, this has to be discussed in terms of perceived degrees of prominence.

Future reporters will be working in different environmental situations and for different types of editors and publishers. Although editors' news values seem to be pretty much standard, regardless of the work environment or training, there are differences which must be taken into account. Editors with extensive reporting backgrounds, for example, may value Impact news more than those whose experience mostly has been on the desk. Editors who have held the same position for years may have a lower "threshhold of boredom" and be more likely to place a higher value on the lighter, Oddity type story. Editors working in various degrees of bad situations may be less predictable in what kinds of news they will play high. Therefore, the tightness of control over them by the publisher, and the likes and dislikes of the publisher, should be considered by the beginning reporter or copyreader.

How could the educator help close the gap between the classroom and the newsroom? The author suggests at least two approaches:

1. Utilization of introduction to journalism courses as channels to introduce the concept of dimensions or elements of news. This kind of introduction could be a logical precedent to reporting courses, preparing students to recognize elements and combinations of elements in stories they write. This also could be helpful to the novice interviewer.

2. Instill investigatory work into senior seminars that follow reporting and editing courses. These seminars might include analyses of news stories by elements *and* by topics to clarify for students that the same topics *can* be played differently due to their inclusion or exclusion of certain news elements. These seminars also could be used to communicate with newsmen, or former newsmen (professors, graduate students, etc.). This could comprise interviews based on the students' perceptions of their own (the students') news values, as a result of their journalism training. The senior seminar could serve as a corrective medium to help the student just prior to launching his career. It can, and should be, more than just a *discussion* of what has been learned. Rather, it could be used to *check* on what has been learned. This would cut down disillusionment in the first months on the job. Also, along this line, students could be asked to Q-sort stories much the same as the editors were asked to do in this study. This kind of "game-playing" would enable the students to avoid a considerable amount of conflict with editors, as they later try to incorporate their own news values into the particular newspaper system.

The author also suggests that strict adherence to the 5 Ws and the inverted pyramid style of writing in journalism schools is not as clear-cut in the field as one is led to believe. Although editors would agree that these are sometimes desirable prescriptions to follow, the author feels these editors often criticize beginning reporters for the very things they and the educators advocate. It is not too uncommon for an editor to say, "Yes, generally, the 5 Ws should be in the lead paragraph, but in this particular story they can be dropped somewhat. The real important angle is further down in your story in this case." The author maintains that these editors are talking about news elements represented by specific facts. However, they often are not able to verbalize this to the beginner.

Thus, the present and future studies can be helpful to editors, as well as educators, simply by enabling them to clarify what they mean in talking about the organization of a story. Too often, editors talk in terms of news sources and topics, when they possibly are referring to news elements. If they could be guided into clarifying their own thinking, the "break-in" time for beginners and the criticism of journalism graduates would diminish.

Aid to the Field. The findings in Ward's bad newspaper situation seem to carry a message for publishers and higher echelon editors who exert varying degrees of control and pressure on their city editors. The editors, it was shown, were confused over how to play some of the stories. Perceptions of stories in such an authoritarian background varied greatly among the editors. Their behavior was less predictable.

Editors, no doubt, worked with a great deal of inner conflict. The product was more of a "watered-down" version of the editors' news values. Many harmless stories were played higher than usual. Highly significant anti-policy stories were played lower than usual.

The bad situation brought up points to be seriously considered by the publisher of such a newspaper. For example: Is his turnover of editorial staffers greater than on newspapers in which editors and reporters work with more freedom? In what subtle ways do editors and reporters "operate on" and manipulate their input so as to reduce dissonance created by conformance to a strict policy? How does such a policy affect the activities of power structures in the community? Are such newspaper policies conducive to the formation of large segments of readership plagued with unrest? And, if so does this open the door of opportunity for formation of successful competing media units? Research built around these questions might lead to some substantial changes in policies of existing media.

Studies such as those herein can be useful to publishers in making major decisions of organizational structure. Would it be desirable, for example, to rotate the staff of editors, say, every five years? Perhaps such a policy would be desirable if veteran city editors do, indeed, get bored and fall into a "robot" pattern of judging the news and, perhaps, come to place undue emphasis on Oddity news because it represents a relief. Or, a publisher who believes in a strong community service function where Impact news is called for, might look for city editors with long writing experience, as opposed to the deskman type. Perhaps editors with limited writing experience, and who are relatively new in the field, would serve better those publishers who want to emphasize conflict.

There is another very important consideration in studies of news values. This involves the news values of readers, as well as editors. The contention that newspapers generally cater to the common denominator of perceived reader taste hardly is debatable. The question is: Do editors know much about reader tastes? Many editors in this study mentioned such things as crime and scandal as highly attractive stories for readers. Yet, their news judgments told a different story. Many of their highly-played Conflict stories also contained High Impact or Known Principals, as Conflict stories often do. Which has the more "pulling power" for the reader? The Conflict element or Impact or Known Principal element? In the Indiana study, the editors' news packages were significantly similar to the readers. They were, however, more impressed with Known Principals and Impact and less influenced by Oddity than were some types of readers.

More studies using readers as respondents seemingly could render a great service to newspaper editors and publishers. It is feasible that readers do not "have to have" a regular diet of conflict, scandal, expose, etc. If, for example, Impact comprises the average reader's most valued news element, why not experiment with story organization that would highlight the Impact of what today is considered dull (but needed) information?

The author feels there is not an inherent difference between what readers want and what readers need. Too much highly publicized research on reader wants and editors' output has concentrated on specific topics and subject matter ....not on news elements. It is not surprising that so many editors contend that their decisions are in line with what the readers want.

Suggested Further Research. The most unfortunate "development" of so much research today is its under-development. Our work, for example, represents a bare skeleton of the nature of decision making. Without refinement of news element levels....without further attempts to gain more rigorous and systematic control of the backgrounds in which editors work....and without further similar investigation of readers' news values, the fairly workable 3-D framework of news will stagnate.

The author suggests several fruitful studies can, and should be, undertaken immediately to refine the present theory involving this--one of the most complex areas of mass communications. Further work should include:

1. A study to determine editors' hierarchy of values of occupational status to establish degrees of importance of Known Principals. Occupations might be separated into broad categories: local officials, county officials, various professions, businessmen, voluntary occupations (leaders of civic activities), etc.
2. A study to determine various levels of Impact. What is the lifetime of Impact stories? How long does it take for local issues to "drop" in terms of space and position in the local newspapers? Is frequency of news on the same topic linked with the degree of Impact it holds? Or, does the "immunity" factor detract from Impact?
3. A study to determine if levels of Conflict include "Renewed Conflict" or "Mortal Conflict." That is, can an old controversy be revived? If so, what is the nature of this revived conflict? A study of an actual editor and the actual local principals and issues involved is suggested here. The Sheppard case would be an example. What is the differential influence of physical and verbal conflict?
4. A study of decision making in actual extremely bad and ideal situations. This would be a

check on the behavior in Ward's hypothetical bad and ideal situations. The researcher might look for confusion and-or uncertainty in the play of certain stories in the bad situation. In the ideal situation, he might look for "unleashed" intrapersonal factors that would account for the news judgment pattern, given the editor has considerable freedom to follow his own inclinations.

5. A study to determine if editors with long reporting experience differ significantly in their news judgment from editors whose experience comprises mostly deskwork.

6. A study to determine if editors with many years on the same job differ importantly in their news judgment from editors with only a few months on the city desk.

7. A study of the news judgment of journalism seniors, compared with journalism graduates who have been in the field two or three years.

8. A study of journalism graduates' news judging at the beginning of their careers on a newspaper, followed by the same study (using the same or similar input) one or two years later. The input would involve actual local persons and issues or events. This would serve better to pinpoint any environmental variables that might alter news values.

No doubt, many other fruitful propositions and-or research approaches are deducible from the 3-D framework of news, even in its tentative, provisional state.

For example, Carter and Rhoades have used the model in reporting and editing classes at Oklahoma State, primarily as a complement to the inverted pyramid concept. They found that as students assimilated the broader, underlying base of news, they were better able to extract priorities from the 5 W's and, thus, show less tendency to write cluttered leads.

Professor William Steng of OSU uses the framework in Introduction to Mass Communication, pointing out its value in predicting gatekeeper behavior. Steng portrays news values as being a general tendency of editors faced with common tasks to display common decisions. His graduate assistant, Ruby Radetrat, exhibits the commonality of this decision-making by comparing the play of different stories with the "same" news dimensions and elements in different newspapers.

The reader again is reminded that the framework's news element definitions obscure potentially important and, heretofore, undisclosed relationships. In the present structure, news stories with common elements should be considered equal only on relatively high levels of abstractions. But much systematic knowledge has been gained through this broader conceptualization of news. Though the resulting "economy of thought" is functional, the framework's haziness begs for more precisely defined news dimensions and elements, etc.

# Appendix A

## Ward's Hypothetical Middleport Stories

ODDITY, KNOWN PRINCIPAL, HIGH IMPACT

Middleport has a good chance of being the angriest city in the nation tomorrow when residents receive their quarterly water bills. A "delinquency fee" will appear on each statement.

However, there's a happy note to the story. "A computer has finally been caught cat-napping," said Russ Poole, city manager. "It was late in getting out the statements, so it automatically registered the bills as overdue."

There's nothing the city can do about it now, Poole said. "Naturally, the delinquent fees won't have to be paid. Everyone should simply deduct the delinquency charge before sending in his payment."

---

Middleport will be operating on emergency electricity until the local power transformer which was damaged--not by lightning, but by a heavy accumulation of deceased cockroaches--is repaired.

The dead roaches caused the 10-minute blackout at 3:30 this morning. In a joint statement, City Manager Russ Poole and Marathon Power Co. President Ron Springer have asked Middleport residents and business firms to use their outlets sparingly.

Springer said the power company is hopeful the transformer can be operating again within 24 hours, but that emergency power must be preserved as a matter of caution.

The Lost and Found Section of the Police Department has received its biggest case in history. Capital Savings, the state's largest loan company, headquartered in Middleport, has reported the loss of more than 3,000 files on Middleport customers.

A cabinet containing files on local customers whose last names begin with A through K came up missing when the company moved into its new headquarters building on Western Ave. Unless the files are found, the company has no official records of the exact amounts owed by the 3,000 local customers.

Police Chief Frank Hudson said that although the possibility of theft hasn't been ruled out, a thorough investigation of the moving vans, the vacated headquarters, and the personnel involved is being conducted.

Any information leading to the whereabouts of the files should be reported to the Police Department. Capital Savings said a reward will be paid for such information.

### ODDITY, HIGH IMPACT

The Bridge St. bridge, which affords the only direct access to work for many Middleport residents, collapsed under two trucks loaded with turkeys and bathtubs early this morning. No one was injured.

The river was cluttered with bathtubs and turkeys which fell from the trucks. In fact, several turkeys were seen riding down-stream in the floating bathtubs.

Until the bridge is repaired, local employees of plants in Palmer City, 50 miles from here, will have to drive 70 miles in a round-about route to work.

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A cigarette unknowingly flipped into a pile of cleaning rags caused fire this morning which gutted the Maple St. Fire Station, leaving the east end of town crippled, as far as fire protection is concerned.

Firemen escaped without injury. But by the time firemen from the north end arrived on the scene, the fire had destroyed all trucks and equipment.

Fire Department officials said plans are to service the east end emergency calls with the north end facilities, located six miles away.

---

The Santa Claus who won the hearts of virtually every Middleporter during the pre-Christmas season exchanged his red and white suit for blue denim prison garb this morning.

Ronald Bateson, 23, convicted auto thief who escaped from the Federal Reformatory here three weeks ago, voluntarily returned "home" today, exclaiming he had just spent the "most satisfying three weeks of his life."

Bateson, unbeknown to Middleport residents, was the jolly old man who posed as Santa Claus on the Court House steps, day after day, for three weeks, bringing joy to hundreds of local tots.

Scores of parents possess photographs taken of their children sitting on "Santa's" knee.

## CONFLICT, KNOWN PRINCIPAL, HIGH IMPACT

Three Negro students from the North High School district were barred from entering the new Fairlawn District High School this morning.

Middleport School Superintendent Byron Hawks said the students could not transfer to Fairlawn because they did not live in that district.

Students who do live in the Fairlawn district formerly attended the integrated North High School, before the new Fairlawn School was opened this year. No Negroes live within the bounds of the newly-formed Fairlawn District.

Fairlawn residents, for the most part, comprise higher income families of Middleport.

The Diamond Rubber Company, which employs 300 persons, may close its doors and move out of Middleport soon, unless the United Rubber Workers Local drops its 14-cent package wage hike demand, which isn't likely.

Ward Keener, plant manager, said the shoe plant would definitely lose money with a 14-cent package increase and would be forced to close its doors within 24 hours.

Clyde Moye, Local 5 president, said the wage demand is not unrealistic and will stand. He says he has figures to show the plant is in no danger of going into the red.

---

Dr. Paul Johnson, superintendent of Middleport's Lakin Mental Hospital, announced his resignation this morning, after a dispute with the State Board of Control over the allocation of hospital funds.

Joe Burdette, president of the Board of Control, said unnecessary staff traveling expenses and parties at the hospital have cost the taxpayers many thousands of additional dollars.

Dr. Johnson defended both charges, saying the staff was justified in traveling to mental health conventions to "keep up on the latest techniques in therapy." As for the hospital parties, the superintendent said they were vital to the mental health of the patients--that they enhanced the opportunity for social mingling.

### CONFLICT, HIGH IMPACT

Five local, non-brand, cut-rate service stations were padlocked by local authorities this morning. Managers were charged with operating pumps adjusted to give the customer a "short gallon" of gasoline.

Police, at press time, were checking 10 other stations suspected of shortchanging customers during the current flurry of "gas wars."

Striking teachers at the West Fifth St. Junior High School stopped picketing last night after a court injunction was issued to ban the action.

A spokesman for the teachers said they have decided to discontinue the strike, which began last week over the firing of a first-year music teacher. The strike has disrupted most of the classes.

---

Residents of the south end are warned to be on the lookout for vandals who apparently have declared a spray-painting war on automobiles.

Kenneth Hammond of Mulberry St. told police he chased a carload of youths several blocks last night before losing them. The vandals had sprayed streaks of black paint along the side of his light-blue station wagon.

In the past three weeks, several residents on the north side reported their cars had been sprayed with paint. Police believe the vandals may be making the rounds of the city.

KNOWN PRINCIPAL, HIGH IMPACT

Middleport, one of seven sites considered for a medium-sized atom smasher, has counted itself out of the running.

The city withdrew at a meeting of county spokesman, former State Representative George Meinhart; state officials, several university heads, and atomic experts at the Argonne Laboratory in Lemont, Ill., today.

Meinhart said the trend of the meeting made it obviously clear that Ross County's chances were not commensurate with the expense and efforts required to remain in the running.

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Although Middleport presently is only mildly affected by the three-week-old rail strike, indications are that many more local businesses will be hurt if the strike continues.

Two of the eight railroads being struck, the Union Pacific and Illinois Central, operate in Middleport. Also, the Middleport railroad yard jam-up has been hindering the services of other railroads in the city.

---

Thomas Ryan will leave the post of local director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) on Jan. 2, a spokesman for the Civil Rights organization said this morning.

Ryan, who has led a strong and successful campaign for racial equality of the local Negro population, said that, although CORE still has a lot of work to do in Middleport, his services are in dire need elsewhere. His successor will be named in two weeks.

HIGH IMPACT

A California firm announced today that it has bought a 100-acre industrial site here and plans to begin manufacture of herbicides within the next two years.

The site, formerly used by the C.L. Blake Co. to make gas storage tanks, has 30,000 square feet of buildings. The plant has been idle since 1961.

---

The price of pork will increase 5 to 10 per cent a pound in most outlets this week. Pork prices charged by wholesalers hit their peak today.

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Middleport may receive a quarter-million dollar federal urban planning grant over the next two-year period, according to the Housing and Urban Development Commission.

ODDITY, KNOWN PRINCIPAL, MAGNITUDE

A regretable mistake in a *Daily* News advertisement yesterday brought about the biggest after-Christmas rush in the history of the local Sears & Roebuck store this morning.

About 400 women were waiting for the store to open, in order to purchase women's suits mistakenly quoted as selling for $3.97. The actual after-Christmas discount price was $39.70.

The Daily News apologizes for the error in printing the advertisement. Apparently the actual discount was still a good buy. The one-day sale was cut short. The store was sold out before noon.

---

To the surprise of everyone, including relatives, the Rev. Mr. William W. Richardson of Middleport started out this morning on a 2400-mile horseback ride to California.

The Methodist minister said he is making the ride in commemoration of the circuit-riding ministers who brought Methodism to rural America.

The Rev. Mr. Richardson has been a leader of the Methodist movement in Middleport and throughout the state for more than 30 years.

---

"That's what I get for believing rumors," said Mrs. Francis Folk, leaning on a cart loaded with 280-five pound bags of sugar she purchased at Benners supermarket this morning.

Mrs. Folk, wife of Maj. Gen. Paul Folk, commander of the state's National Guard, apparently was told a sugar shortage was immediately forthcoming because of the demands in Viet Nam.

"The only sugar shortage I know of is right here," said Keith Reeves, manager of the supermarket. "This lady just bought every grain I had on hand."

CONFLICT, KNOWN PRINCIPAL, MAGNITUDE

Sheriff Okey Mills, after a 90-mile-per-hour chase north on Route 30 early this morning, arrested three youths who confessed they were leaders of Ross County's gas stealing ring.

In the past three months, some 10,000 gallons of gasoline have been siphoned from bulk plant tanks here.

---

Multi-millionaire mortician Henry Ewing, in a heated discussion with city officials today, turned an about-face on his tentative agreement to sell to the city three vacant lots downtown.

The property, located at Court and Second Sts., is one of the sections sought for a city garage and parking for city vehicles.

City Manager Russ Poole said the city was authorized to pay Ewing $½ million for the property.

Ewing told the Daily News he had second thoughts about selling the lots. The garage and parking lot, which would lie adjacent to his mortuary, would destroy the peace and dignity of his business, he said.

---

Nine guns, $20,000 in cash and old coins, four rings, 200 stereophonic records, and a new set of encyclopedias were stolen last night from the home of County Coroner Dr. B.H. Osten, after he was knocked unconscious by thieves.

### CONFLICT, KNOWN PRINCIPAL

Russ Poole, who officially took office as new city manager Monday, promptly fired two city patrolmen this morning. The action was taken, he said, to end what seemed to be unreconcilable grievances held between the patrolmen and the officers over the operation of the department.

---

Fred Weber, city councilman and business manager of the

*Daily News*, challenged the local draft board in a civil suit today on its right to draft his son, who dropped from the State University for one semester.

---

Clifford C. Johnson, 43, well-known local attorney who lost his bid for governor last year, was killed today in a head-on collision on Route 30, a half mile east of here.

CONFLICT, MAGNITUDE

Seven persons were injured three miles south of here on the Charleston Pike last night in a head-on collision, which occurred when one car tried to pass a slow-moving piece of farm machinery.

One car was driven by Darrell Hinty, 23, of Caldwell St. The driver and five passengers in the second car were from Central City, 60 miles north of here.

---

Ross County set a record over the long Christmas weekend, but it wasn't a record one can be proud of or boast about. Six persons, one a local resident, died in traffic accidents.

---

Ten parking meters in succession were snapped off at ground level last night when a speeding driver lost control on Mulberry St.

Fred Stitt,23, driver of the car which hit the meters, sustained head and chest injuries. Police charged him with....

CONFLICT

Three men were treated and released at Middleport City Hospital this morning with stab wounds sustained in separate fracases at local taverns last night.

Mrs. Beth Crowley, 43, of Paint St., was hospitalized with gunshot wounds inflicted early this morning by her estranged husband, Albert.

---

A local family was notified today of the death of a son in Viet Nam. Mrs. Emma Weber received word that her son, Dennis Lee, 20, a U.S. Marine, was killed in action.

KNOWN PRINCIPAL, MAGNITUDE

Middleport's City Manager's salary was officially increased by $5,000 to $30,000 a year last night, as the city council held its first meeting after new city manager, Russ Poole, took office Monday. The salary increase for the top city post was voted on at last month's council meeting.

---

Prosecuting Attorney Jim O'Brien said this morning the Ross County Grand Jury, which convenes next month, will hear the prima facie evidence on 70 cases involving felony charges. This is the greatest number of cases for one jury to hear in the history of the county, he said.

---

A prison sentence which could keep Charles B. (Black Charlie) Harris behind bars for the rest of his life was levied this morning in Common Pleas Court.

Harris was sentenced to 99 years for the slaying of Mrs. Betty Saylor last year. Harris, a long-time resident here, was a well known gangland figure of the Prohibition Days.

KNOWN PRINCIPAL

Municipal Judge Luther Glanton was elected president of the State Municipal Judges' Association this morning, during the Association's annual meeting here in the Hotel Kirkwood.

Mrs. Emma Ronk, well-known author, poet, and preacher, who celebrated her 70th birthday recently, died in California today after a long illness.

A former local resident, Mrs. Ronk moved to California five years ago.

---

George Marlan, former Middleport Mayor, was named city manager of Council Bluffs, Ariz., the city council there announced this morning.

Marlan, mayor for two terms here, moved to Arizona two years ago for his health.

ODDITY, KNOWN PRINCIPAL

Should motorcycles get a safety check, as well as automobiles? Clyde Moomaw, principal of Middleport's North High School, thinks it's a good idea.

Jaycee volunteer safety inspectors were somewhat puzzled today when Moomaw appeared at the Talmadge Ave. safety check point to get a safety check for his motorcycle which is adorned with twin, chrome-plated carburetors. Nevertheless, Moomaw was issued a safety sticker.

The 60-year-old principal got interested in motorcycles two years ago while working with youths in the Middleport Motorcycle Club. He rides his bike to school year-round.

---

Mrs. Anna Hefferman, well known in Middleport as the "oldest youth leader," died today of complications of old age. She was 100 years old.

Just two years ago, Mrs. Hefferman was active in spearheading a drive which resulted in the building of Middleport's youth center. She remained active in organizing and advising youth groups throughout the city until about six months ago.

Philip Gourley, 8-year-old son of Justice of Peace David Gourley, redirected pedestrian traffic in the busy 200 block of Main St. last night, while a mother gave birth to quadruplets. The mother was a Cocker Spaniel.

When Philip saw the dog lie down on the sidewalk in the lane of pedestrian traffic, he rushed to her aid. But by that time it was too late. The hour of birth had come. Philip hovered over the dog, protecting her from being stepped on, while she gave birth to four bouncing baby boys.

ODDITY, MAGNITUDE

It always pays to check one's mailbox every day, especially at Christmas-time, as Frank Butterbaugh, 75, who, for years, has lived in a one-room shack on the city dump, will testify.

Butterbaugh, whose only mail normally is his monthly Social Security check, which he receives at a service station mailbox nearby, stopped to pick up his check this morning.

He found two checks: his Social Security check and a cashier's check for $10,000, with a note reading, "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." The note was unsigned.

---

Six boys of three sets of twins died three hours apart this morning at City Hospital. The twins were sons of Mr. and Mrs. William Robinson of Tecumseh, Mr. and Mrs. William Bauler of Water St., and Mr. and Mrs. Art McDowell of Delano Ave.

---

Local law enforcement officers said today they have "freed" a 64-year-old woman who had been locked in a stable just south of town for two years.

Officers said Giuseppa Giordano was kept in a stable by her brother, Gaetano and his wife, Julia. They failed to obtain any reasonable explanation for the imprisonment.

The only comment was made by the "prisoner." Mrs. Gioradano said the stable had all the comforts of home. There were 500 bottles of aged wine stored in the horse stalls.

### ODDITY

Carl Nutt, radar operator at the Highway Patrol Station, instructed a patrol car to stop a driver on the Upper River Road this morning. As it turned out, his efficiency at spotting speeders on the radar screen cost him money.

The speeding car proved to be his own. The driver? Mrs. Nutt. The fine? Fifteen dollars and costs.

---

There's a good reason why Gary Sachs of Fremont St., has installed a phone booth in his kitchen.

"Sometimes my wife talks on the phone all day. The kids chatter when she isn't on the phone and this makes phone conversation difficult. When the phone does ring for me, I have to take it into the closet," he said.

The used booth, complete with light and fan, was bought for $10. "The way my wife talks, I may put in a pay phone," Sachs said.

---

"I'm sure there'll be a lot of people giving up drinking for life," a state highway patrolman observed contentedly last night, after frazzled motorists reported being charged by a small herd of cows a mile north of Middleport.

"To startled holidaymakers, it must have been a frightening sight," said the patrolman.

### MAGNITUDE

Twenty cars of the C&T freight train railroad were derailed about 3:15 a.m. today, a mile south of here. No one was injured.

Fifteen of the cars were loaded with meat.

The degree of radioactivity in pasteurized milk, which caused a great deal of concern in Middleport recently remains far below the level established as an "acceptable health risk," health officials reported today. Tests were run on 180 samples collected in Middleport.

---

The Middleport Municipal Utilities has mailed out refund checks totaling $11,000 to approximately 475 electrical service customers, the company announced this morning.

NO NEWS

Edward T. Hoyt, a local furniture repairman, has been appointed foreman of the Ross County Grand Jury for the term of January through April.

---

The West Enid Polka Club, comprising about 40 members, will hold a dance tomorrow night at Thaxton Hall, starting at 8:30.

---

Dan Miller of Middleport North High School is one of the 19 guidance counselors in this state who will leave tomorrow for a three-day tour of eastern seaboard high schools.

# Appendix B

## Bad and Ideal Newspaper Scenario

### BAD NEWSPAPER SITUATION

The city editor's job you're applying for requires you to be on the job six days a week, from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. Your paper's circulation is 25,000. You have competition from a morning newspaper of 10,000 circulation in Middleport.

Middleport has very little industry and a limited amount of agriculture. A state university is located in Middleport, with 15,000 students. In fact, about 20 students at the university's journalism school are taking practical reporting under you. You also have three regular reporters.

The city editor, himself, headlines and edits all copy and makes up the city page. He never has enough space. News from five surrounding towns in which the *Daily News* circulates takes up much space. You also are competing with small local dailies in these surrounding towns.

The publisher is 55 years old. He inherited the *Daily News* and has sole control. He's a community leader and on the university's board of trustees. He is ruthless and knee-deep in prejudices. He refuses to talk things over with his editorial people. He is an active watchdog over every phase of the operation.

The publisher and Fred Weber, the circulation-business manager, run the paper. Weber, who also is a city councilman, is always delving into editorial matters. Weber's word, like that of the publisher, is law on the *Daily News*.

Your direct boss is the managing editor. He's in his mid-50s and an ardent segregationist, as are the publisher and Weber. Also, your boss--that is, if you get the job--stands in awe of community influentials. They fascinate him. He instructs his city editor to play up stories about influentials in a big way. He has written favorable stories about influentials and handed them to the city editor with instructions on how to play them.

The Daily News is strong Republican. It's also anti-lots-of-things, according to how the publisher feels about issues. You would be urged to play down civil rights movements. "Who gives a damn?" the publisher asks.

Pressure from outside sources is readily yielded to. All government and university bodies and community influentials call the shots. Police reporters, for example, have been transferred to other beats, or fired, because they got too ambitious and the police chief complained to the publisher. Only Negroes and other so-called minority groups fail to exert pressure.

Accuracy and truth suffer because of this. Many stories are run with incomplete facts, because the police chief or other influentials think they should be left out.

In essence, the city editor's job, in the past, has been rather routine. It doesn't take the city editor long to learn what to run and what not to run. And he can expect to hear from the publisher almost every day about something that was played too high or too low.

Crusades are non-existent, except for onslaughts against people who irritate the publisher. Usually, these are minority groups who kindle his prejudices. Never is anything said against the "big whigs" in town.

Other pressure comes from the advertising department. The city editor is not permitted to question them. Advertising employes, like those in circulation, are considered to be more important than editorial people. It would be unwise for the city editor to print anything adverse about an advertiser or potential advertiser. At the same time, it would be wise for the editor to play up "good" stories about these people.

The newsroom is a noisy, informal atmosphere. Nobody takes things too seriously. There is much tomfoolery. At the same time, there is much bickering and backbiting. Everyone seems to "sit on the edge of his chair," waiting for a tongue-lashing from the publisher. Most all city room personnel are discontented with the publisher, salaries, and the heavy workload.

The city editor, himself, has practically no authority over the reporter. The publisher "takes care of them." Many reporters, in the past, have been cursed out and fired on the spot by the publisher.

Just getting stories in shape to put in the paper seems to be the prime concern on the Daily News. Trying to get the "man bites dog" angle on stories is not felt to be important.

The paper is well off, but pay is low. The policy is to pay as little as possible. When union activity was rumored recently, the salaries of a few key people were raised to squelch the move. Circulation and advertising budgets are lenient, but the outlay for city coverage and city desk people is "pitiful." A city editor with 10 years' service--the man whose job you're interviewing for--was paid only $125 a week.

Your news comes mostly from city hall and the university. There are many smaller stories from practically every source, which are gathered by student reporters. But due to tight space, these are not used, for the most part.

## IDEAL NEWSPAPER SITUATION

The city editor's job you're applying for requires you to be on the job five days a week, from 7 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. You have no competition at all in Middleport.

The community is heavily laden with diversified industry.

The city editor's job is to edit and headline all local news stories and lay out city pages. He usually has plenty of space for this. He also has plenty of competent help on the desk, so that ample time can be spent on editing and rewriting of stories. The city editor is charged with making general assignments to reporters. He has a close relationship with beat men.

The publisher is in his mid-50s. He's a multi-millionaire Democrat, and is liberal on issues like medicare, civil rights, anti-poverty, etc. He's a kind person. Always for the underdog. He's friendly with the city editor and all the staff. And he doesn't meddle in their business.

The city editor's direct boss is the managing editor, a man with 20 years' service. He's a journalism graduate. He is very competent, conscientious, and organized. He, too, gives the city editor pretty much of a free hand in his job.

The Daily News is Democratic, but not militantly so. It takes special pains to give balanced coverage to political parties, or any parties with opposing points of view.

Outside pressures on the city editor are unheard of. News sources and community influentials learned a long time ago to respect the paper's dignity. They know if they ever tried to keep worthy news out or to force unworthy material into the paper, the Daily News would go all out to expose them after a thorough investigation.

Top-notch writing, depth reporting, and the ability to brighten a story and find the "man bites dog" angle are a rule of thumb on the *Daily News*. However, all these things are tempered by the strict requirement for accuracy and truth. Even though a big story breaks just before deadline, the *Daily News* will not run it, if important facts are obviously missing at that time.

Interpretive reporting on community issues is an on-going activity on the *Daily News*. And the staff is well qualified to handle this sort of thing. The reportorial staff is manned by aggressive, ambitious young men from the top journalism schools. The operation is efficient. The reporters conduct themselves in a straightforward, dignified manner. There is no such thing as office politics and "throat-cutting." And catering to management is not encouraged.

Firings are practically non-existent on the *Daily News*. However, this doesn't mean the city editor has no say over the reporters. He does. His word carries a lot of weight.

Merit raises are frequent for newer *and* older employes alike. Although the newsroom is not a member of the Guild, the salaries are comparable, or perhaps they exceed the Guild scale.

Local news comes from virtually everywhere. The staff is large and it blankets the city. Politics, government, and schools are big sources. The city editor even has a reporter stationed at the State House, 200 miles away. State House news is run on the local pages. The *Daily News* spares no expense on its local coverage.

# Appendix C

## Rhoades' Wire Service Stories

CONFLICT, PROMINENCE, IMPACT

David Hall and Bryce Baggett emerged as the leaders in the Democratic gubernatorial primary last night and will meet in a runoff.

Both candidates predicted victory. Hall led in the balloting, but could not capture a majority.

---

Dr. J. Herbert Hollomon resigned today as president of the University of Oklahoma with a parting blast at Gov. Dewey Bartlett.

Hollomon had been under fire from Bartlett and others since the student anti-war demonstrations at OU last May, but OU regents voted last month to extend his contract for another year.

---

A district judge today granted an injunction which blocks a rock festival scheduled this weekend at Turner Falls.

Dist. Judge Bob Howell made his ruling on the request of Atty. Gen. G.T. Blankenship after two days of arguments on whether the proposed rock festival would be a health and traffic hazard.

Opponents said the festival would attract thousands of hippies to the state and create a drug problem.

---

Oklahoma will lose one of its six congressional seats on the basis of preliminary census figures released today in Washington.

Legislative sources immediately speculated that either U.S. Rep. John N. Happy Camp, R-Waukomis, or U.S. Rep. Tom Stead, D-Shawnee, would be likely choices for a head-on battle for survival.

### ODDITY, PROMINENCE, IMPACT

Thousands of Oklahomans will be among the angriest in the nation tomorrow when they receive their state income tax forms. A delinquency notice will be enclosed.

"A computer has finally been caught cat-napping," said Leo Winters, state treasurer.

The computer mistake was caught, but not before thousands of notices were mailed.

Winters said citizens should just ignore the delinquency notices.

---

State election board secretary Basil Wilson said today thousands of ballots for the November election would have to be reprinted because a name had been left off.

He said a rush printing job would have to be undertaken to insure ballots for all election boards in the state.

American party candidate Glenn O. Young's name was left off the ballot for attorney general, he said. The error was discovered after hundreds of thousands of the ballots were already printed.

---

An electrical power blackout hit large sections of Oklahoma today. Electrical company officials said the shortage was caused by a heavy accumulation of dead cockroaches in a key power transformer near Enid.

Gov. Dewey Bartlett said his office was looking into the situation.

The dead roaches caused a 10-minute blackout at 3 p.m.

today in most of Oklahoma City, Tulsa and other areas of northern and north central Oklahoma.

---

A swarm of angry bees today routed state legislators from the legislative chambers, delaying the opening session of the legislature.

Legislators were getting ready for the first session when the bees suddenly poured into the chamber, scattering lawmakers.

State capitol workers were trying to clear the bees out during the afternoon.

CONFLICT, IMPACT

The possibilities of a rabies flareup in widespread portions of Oklahoma were raised today in the wake of reports of rabid animals were reported in Caddo, Stephens, Harmon, Jackson and Grady counties.

---

Five non-brand, cut-rate service stations in Oklahoma City and Tulsa were padlocked this morning and managers were charged with operating pumps adjusted to give the customer a "short gallon" of gasoline.

Police in the two cities were checking about 10 other stations suspected of short-changing customers during the current flurry of "gas wars."

---

Oklahoma cattle raisers were warned today by law enforcement officials that cattle thefts were increasing in the state.

Crime bureau agents were investigating the theft of 40 steers near Waurika and another theft of 55 head near Enid.

Twenty young persons were arrested last night in a series of raids in four state cities as officials launched a crackdown on drug violators.

Youths were arrested in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Norman and Stillwater and charged with illegal possession of marijuana.

ODDITY, IMPACT

The Santa Claus who won the hearts of many Oklahomans during the pre-Christmas season exchanged his red and white suit for blue denim prison garb today.

Ronald Bateson, 23, convicted auto thief who escaped from El Reno Federal Reformatory three weeks ago, voluntarily returned "home" today, explaining he had spent the "most satisfying three weeks of my life."

Bateson was the man who posed as the jolly old Santa Claus on the Oklahoma state capitol building steps day after day for three weeks bringing joy to hundreds of tots. Scores of parents possess photos taken of their children sitting on Santa's knee.

---

Three frightened elephants held up air traffic at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City for hours today.

The elephants broke loose at a nearby circus and roamed back and forth across runways at the airport. Incoming flights had to circle while circus employees tried to recapture the elephants.

Air traffic at the state's biggest airport was shut down for three hours.

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A cigarette, unknowingly flipped into a pile of cleaning rags, caused a fire this morning which gutted the main Oklahoma City Fire Station, leaving a large portion of the state capital city crippled for fire protection.

A squirrel with a taste for cable today knawed into a key telephone line near Chickasha and knocked out phone service for most of central Oklahoma, including a large part of Oklahoma City.

The squirrel was electrocuted on the spot. Phone workers were several hours restoring service to the blanked out area.

CONFLICT, PROMINENCE

Secretary of State John Rogers is a co-defendant in a $5 million countersuit filed in District Court involving an Oklahoma City firm in which Rogers was once a partner.

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Former University of Oklahoma football star James Robert "Bob" Kalsu has been killed in action in Vietnam, his family said today.

Kalsu, an All-American selection in 1967, was killed by mortar fire.

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Nine guns, $20,000 in cash and old coins, four rings, 200 stereo records and a new set of encyclopedias were stolen last night from the home of Dr. James Luke, state medical examiner, after he was knocked unconscious.

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Hank Thompson, popular country and western singer, and his wife Dorothy are expected to be divorced tomorrow in Tulsa District Court ending a 2-year divorce case and 23 years of marriage.

ODDITY, PROMINENCE

"Two heads are better than one," Sen. Fred Harris said today.

One of Harris' father's cows on the family farm near Hastings gave birth to a two-headed calf today.

Victor Wickersham, former Oklahoma congressman, said today his farm near Mangum was being invaded by hordes of small black and yellow lizards.

Wickersham said he was told by experts that the lizards were "Tiger Salamanders." The salamanders, he was told, migrate to farm poinds and apparently Wickersham's farm was selected as the migration site.

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Sen. Henry Bellmon is suffering from a sprained shoulder sustained when he went to an Atlantic Ocean beach at Assateague, Va.

"I was body surfing and got caught by a big wave. It dumped me end over end," the senator said.

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Gov. Dewey Bartlett was a delighted golfer today. He fired a 220-yard hole-in-one today at the Quail Creek golf course in Oklahoma City.

PROMINENCE, IMPACT

Rep. Carl Albert, D-Okla., today said federal aid for Oklahoma highways would total $15 million this coming year, a new high for the state.

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Oklahoma House Speaker Rex Privett sewed up a third term in the powerful post Wednesday as House Democrats made him a near-unanimous choice in the caucus he called.

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Phillips Petroleum Co., Bartlesville, announced today it was raising the price of its regular gasoline two cents a gallon to retailers. The increase is expected to boost gasoline prices throughout the state.

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Oklahoma, one of the seven states considered for a medium-sized atom smasher, has counted itself out of the running.

The state withdrew at a meeting today at the Argonne Laboratory in Lemont, Ill. Attending the meeting were Gov. Dewey Bartlett and other state officials.

Bartlett said the trend of the meeting made it clear that the state's chances were not commensurate with the expense and efforts required to remain in the running.

### IMPACT

State tax collections during the fiscal year that ended June 30 totaled $523,581,397, topping the half-billion mark for the first time and surpassing the previous year's all time high by some $35 million.

A plan to increase auto license tags in Oklahoma for 1971 by an average of $5 per tag was approved today.

Oklahoma schools are scheduled to receive approximately $15 million in federal aid during the coming school year, it was announced today in Washington.

Tuition increases of $6 an hour were announced today for all colleges and universities in the state.

### CONFLICT

A 16-year-old Tulsa youth remained in poor condition in the intensive care unit of a Tulsa hospital tonight after being shot earlier in the day. A 24-year-old man was charged in connection with the shooting.

An Oklahoma City man was killed last night in a head-on collision three miles east of Oklahoma City on Interstate 40. The victim was identified as Adam Lowe, Oklahoma City.

A 79-year-old Oklahoma City woman was found dead in her apartment today. Police said the woman had been strangled.

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A Midwest City youth hitchhiking from Tulsa to his home was robbed at gunpoint today by a man who picked him up at the Tulsa Turner Turnpike Gate. A short time later a suspect was arrested at Chandler.

ODDITY

Fred Avery was an unobtrusive old man who lived for 40 years in a downtown Oklahoma City hotel so close to the economic edge that he collected and sold soda bottles to buy buy his 35-cent breakfast and $2 dinner.

He died last week and left an estate of more than $1.8 million.

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It always pays to check one's mailbox every day, especially at Christmas-time, as Jerry Wells, 75, who for years has lived in a one-room shack near a southside auto salvage yard, will testify.

Wells, whose only mail normally is his monthly social security check, stopped to pick up his check this morning.

He found two checks: his social security check and a cashier's check for $10,000, with a note reading "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." The note was unsigned.

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Oklahoma County deputies said today they have "freed" a 64-year-old woman who had been locked in a stable about five miles east of Oklahoma City for two years.

Deputies said Ruth Monetatchi was kept in a stable by her brother, Fred Tomah, and wife, Gertie. No explanation was given for the imprisonment.

Mrs. Monetatchi said the stable had all the comforts of home. There were some 500 bottles of wine stored in the horse stalls.

Brian Hughes, 23, Oklahoma City, lined up a buyer for 4,000 wartime military police helmets at $2.40 each and purchased them at a military surplus auction.

The buyer backed out, leaving Hughes with a houseful of helmets and he said he's sell them at $1.20 each, or 36 cents apiece to anyone who would take the lot.

### PROMINENCE

Jim G. Lucas, a native of Checotah who became a world famous newspaper man will be buried in Checotah tomorrow.

Dale Robertson, Oklahoma-born movie star, was top bidder at a quarterhorse sale near Yukon yesterday.

Jim Shoulders, former rodeo champion, plans to take part in the performance tonight of the annual state Prison Rodeo in McAlester.

Mickey Mantle, former New York Yankee baseball great, will be a special guest at a program tomorrow in his hometown of Commerce.

### NO NEWS

The first horse entry has been made at the state fair by a Midwest City woman, Mrs. Bernice Hahne, who entered an unnamed paint filly.

Four Oklahoma guidance counselors will leave tomorrow for a three-week tour of high schools on the Atlantic Coast.

William T. Nailon, Jr. was named biologist in the southwestern division office of the Army Engineers at Dallas today after serving in the same capacity in Tulsa for 24 years.

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The South Side Oklahoma City Do-Si-Do Square Dance Club, comprising about 40 members, will hold a dance at 8:30 p.m. tomorrow in the Town and Country Dance Club Building, 1209 NW 23rd.

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